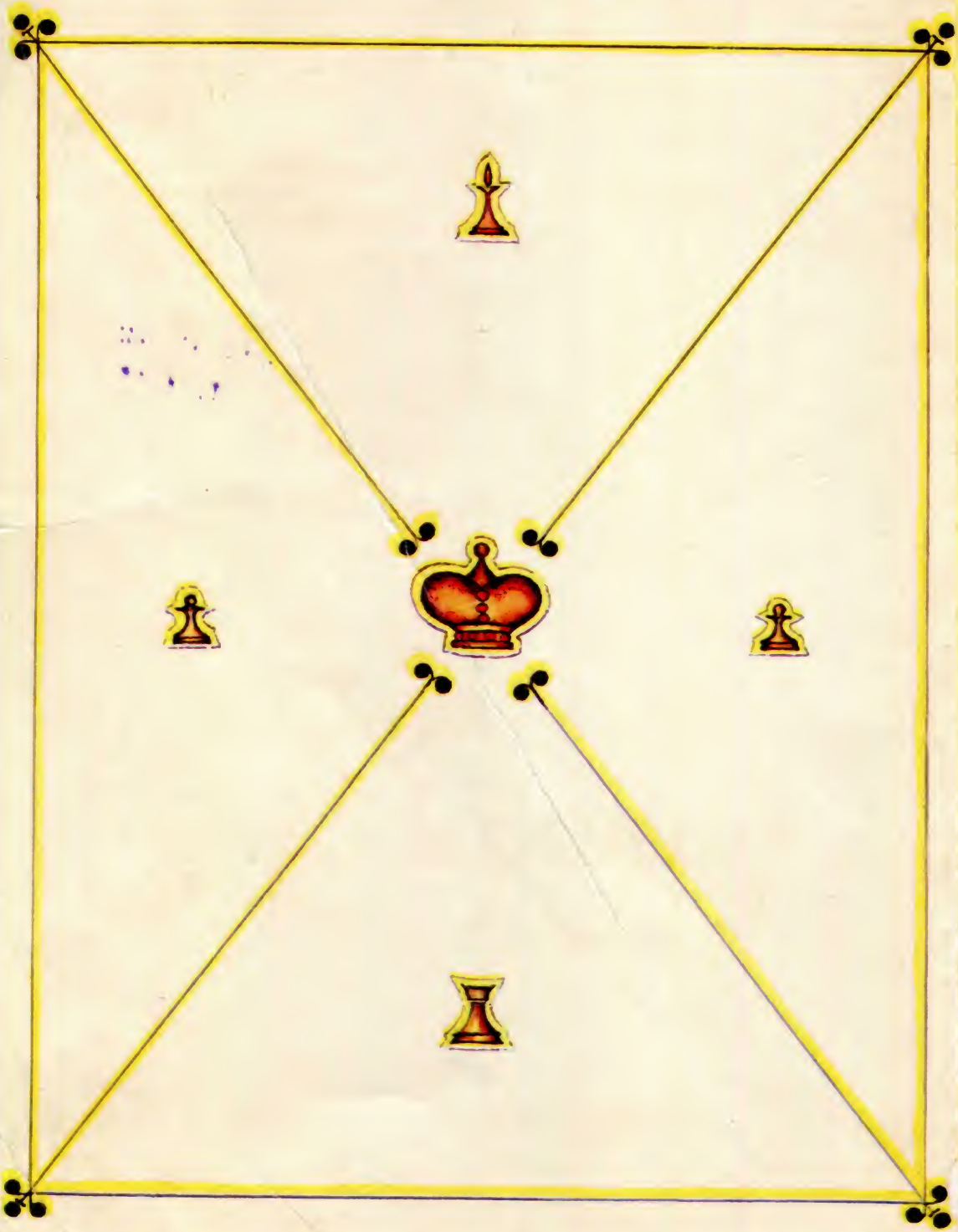
V. Grishin and E. Ilyin

The ABC of Chess



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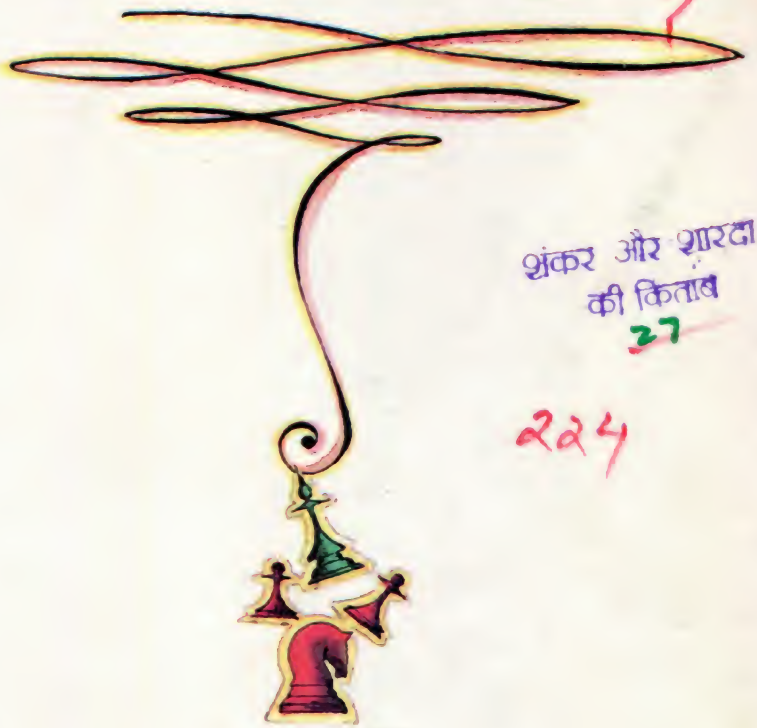

The ABC of Chess

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Translated from the Russian by VIVIENNE BURDON

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ШАХМАТНАЯ АЗБУКА

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Foreword for Parents

Chess is one of the oldest games to have come down to us through the centuries. At the same time it is a very modern game attracting an ever-growing number of enthusiasts through the world. The inexhaustible possibilities of chess, its depth of content, the combination of strict logic and unlimited scope for the display of initiative and imagination have made the game a part of our cultural heritage. "The game of wise men", "mental gymnastics" — these and other descriptions reflect the seriousness and respect with which many people approach this remarkable game.

In the Soviet Union there are many chess clubs in Pioneer Palaces, Palaces of Culture and schools, but they all cater for children in the older age group. There are, however, a lot of children between the ages of 5—7 who are interested in chess and want to learn to play. We have written this book to help younger children take their first steps on the chessboard.

As a rule the first books a child comes to know are read aloud to him by his parents and this one need be no exception. The authors hope that all you parents will cooperate with them in their attempt to foster the interest of young children of preschool age in this fascinating game. If you yourselves play chess, you can vary and diversify the examples given. If, on the other hand, you have never had occasion to sit down at a chessboard, this book will be a guide in the land of chess for you too, and, who knows, your child's enthusiasm may affect you as well.

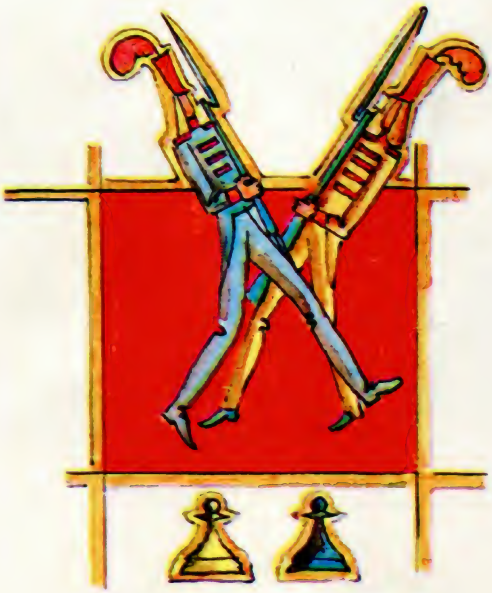
Don't hurry when you read "The ABC of Chess" to your child, don't cover more than one chapter a week. In your instruction pay more attention to the principle of play. Follow the diagrams in the sequence indicated by the symbols.

If your child can already read and wants to be independent, allow him to tackle "The ABC of Chess" but in sen-

sible doses. The material is not easy and large "portions" will only tire him and make it more difficult for him to learn.

The authors decided to omit some of the more difficult rules of the game such as capturing *en passant* and castling in the path of a hostile man. In the early stages these rules can be ignored. If necessary, parents can settle an argument when they have studied these rules which are explained in the appendix.

A War of Wood



Sasha had been given a chess set. The small smooth figures still smelling of varnish lay in a checkered wooden box. There were horses, turrets and strange little dolls which resembled miniature men. Sasha liked these funny little figures but had no idea what to do with them. And his father and mother couldn't help because they didn't know how to play chess themselves.

Soon the large wooden box began to get in Sasha's way and he pushed it under the sofa. There it stayed and he forgot about the box with the horses, the turrets and the dolls like miniature men lying inside it.

One day Sasha's best friend Boris came round. The boys started to play hockey, hitting a ball around the floor with coloured plastic sticks. Time and again the quick-moving ball rolled under the table or the cupboard and the boys took it in turn to push their sticks under the furniture, trying to coax the ball back into the middle of the "pitch".

Once the ball rolled under the sofa and Boris crawled after it. But instead of the ball he pulled out the wooden box covered in dust.

"It's a chess set!" Boris exclaimed in delight, forgetting about the ball that had disappeared under the sofa. "Let's have a game of chess!"

"I can't play..." Sasha stammered, blushing with embarrassment.

"There's nothing to it! We'll play being at war."

Boris opened the box and emptied the light and dark-coloured figures onto the table.

"I'll have the yellow soldiers and you can have the black ones. Line up your troops," Boris ordered, picking out the light-coloured figures. He stood them one beside the other at the end of the table and soon there was a long row of light-coloured men drawn up like an entire army. Boris helped Sasha to line up the black men at the other end of the table and then went to get a red plastic cube from the toy-box.

"We'll take it in turns to shoot. Like this — see?" Boris placed the cube in front of his troops and sent it forward with a powerful flick of the finger. The plastic missile flew across the table and knocked down two black fighting men. Sasha wanted to stand his soldiers up again, but Boris said they were dead and couldn't get up. Then Sasha placed the cube on the table and carefully crooking his middle finger, flicked it forward with all his might. But not a single enemy soldier fell—he had aimed the cube too high.

The next shot was better and a white cavalryman fell to the floor. But Sasha's army suffered greater losses because Boris was a better marksman.

"Don't worry, you'll learn," Boris encouraged his friend. But Sasha's progress gave him no pleasure—he felt sorry for the neat little fighting men gleaming in the sun and flying in all directions after every successful shot.

The war of wood was in full swing when Sasha's next-door neighbour Peter came in. Peter was two years older than Sasha and Boris. He had already turned seven and everyone knew that he was starting school in the autumn.

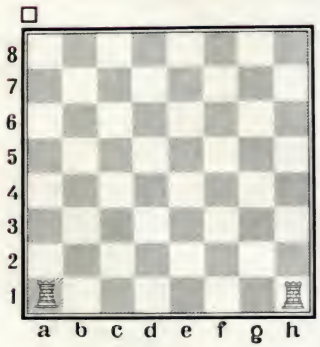
"What are you doing?" Peter asked, looking at the light and dark-co-

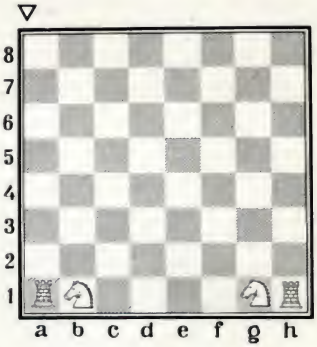
Sasha looked at Boris anxiously. Boris had thought up this game and it was for him to prove to Peter that they were playing properly.

"We'll play as we want," Boris said sulkily. "We're at war. This is my army and that's Sasha's; whoever kills more enemy soldiers wins."

"Some army!" Peter laughed. "They stand on the spot and wait until they're knocked down! In a chess army there is an infantry, a cavalry and guns and commanding officers — and they all move in different ways."

"Where do they move to?" Sasha asked in surprise.





loured figures scattered over the floor.

"Can't you see, we're playing chess..." Boris answered.

"Yes, we're playing chess, can't you see?" Sasha confirmed, echoing Boris's words.

"You don't play chess like that!" Peter said indignantly. "You're knocking down the men any old how, it's all the same to you whether it's a Pawn or a Queen!"

"They just move — over the board and not over the table. And anyway they move according to rules — there's a different rule for each piece."

Peter took the chess box and opened it out on the table so that it became a large square board made up of small black and white squares. He picked out two of the light-coloured figures that looked like turrets and put them on the corner squares at one end of the board.

"These are Castles, although Dad says they are really called Rooks, and they must stand in the corners. And these are Knights, they go next to the Rooks."

Then Peter took two pieces that tapered to a point and said they were called Bishops.

"They look more like Bishops' mitres," Boris observed.

"I thought so too at first," Peter agreed.

Sasha kept silent. He was really keen now to discover how chess is played and learn as quickly as possible.

Peter put the Bishops next to the Knights leaving two empty squares in the middle of the row. Then he picked up the two biggest of the light-coloured pieces from the chessmen lying in disarray on the floor. He called the one with a small black knob in the middle of his crown a King and this made sense—in fairy stories kings were always bigger and more important than anyone else. Peter said the other piece was called a Queen which was not so easy to understand.

"Why should a Queen go to war?" Sasha asked.

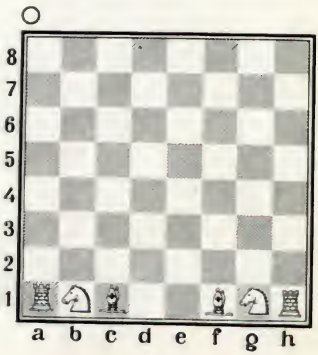
"Well, you see, she's there to protect the King who is her husband, and she is very powerful. Anyway, in the chess army this piece is called a Queen."

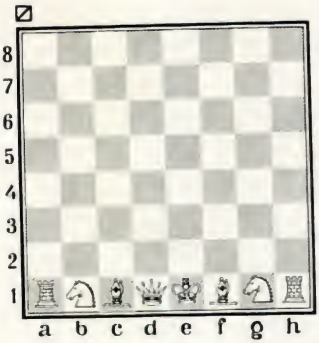
"All right," Sasha agreed rather reluctantly.

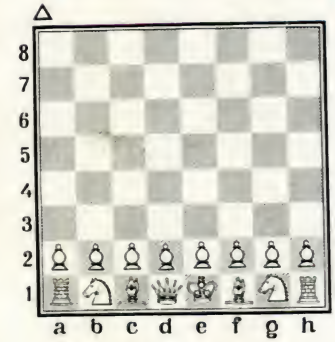
"So, here is the King and here is the Queen," Peter continued.

He put the King on the black square and the Queen on the white square.

Now the whole of the first row of the board was occupied. Only the smallest







of the light-coloured men which were all identical remained on one side.

"These are Pawns," Peter explained, placing the small figures on the second row of the board in front of the larger pieces. "That's how the chess army should stand! Now you line up the Black troops in the same way."

Sasha and Boris set up the Black pieces as Peter had arranged the White ones—the Rooks in the corners, the Knights next to them and then the Bishops. It was only the most important pieces that they were not sure where to put—should the King go on the right and the Queen on the left or the other way round? Peter came to their assistance.

"The White Queen," he said, "must stand on a white square and the Black Queen on a black square."

"It's not a White Queen, it's a Yellow Queen," Boris corrected him. He loved to argue and the light-coloured pieces really were yellow.

"No, it's White," said Peter shaking his head emphatically. "That's because the whole chess army is called Black and White—doesn't matter what colour they're painted!"

When the boys had set up all the pieces and all the Pawns, Boris asked:

"What are we going to knock them down with?"

"All you want to do is knock down!" Peter said in annoyance. "They'll knock each other down, just as in a real battle."

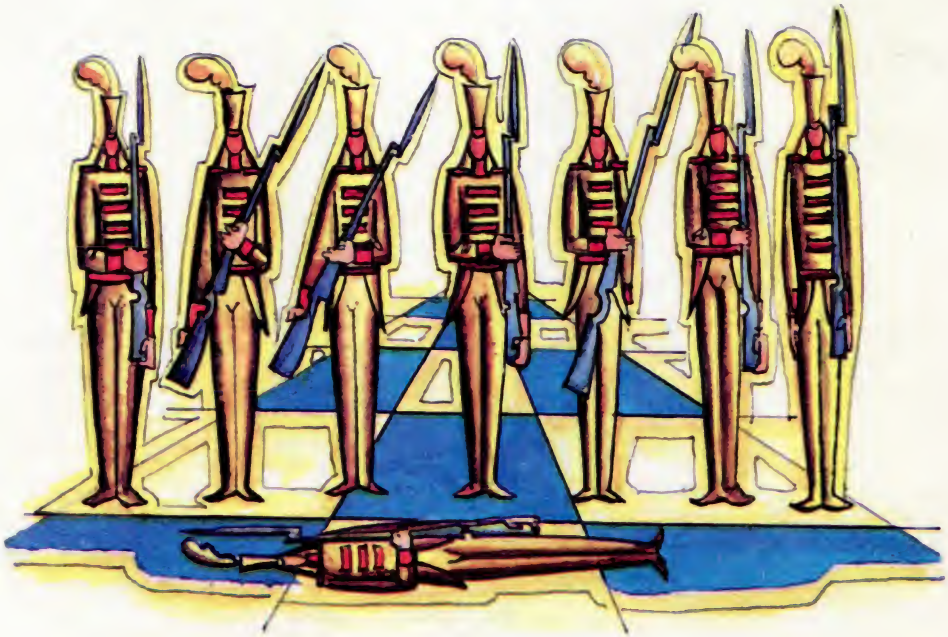
Sasha said he could hardly wait to begin a game, but Peter only laughed.

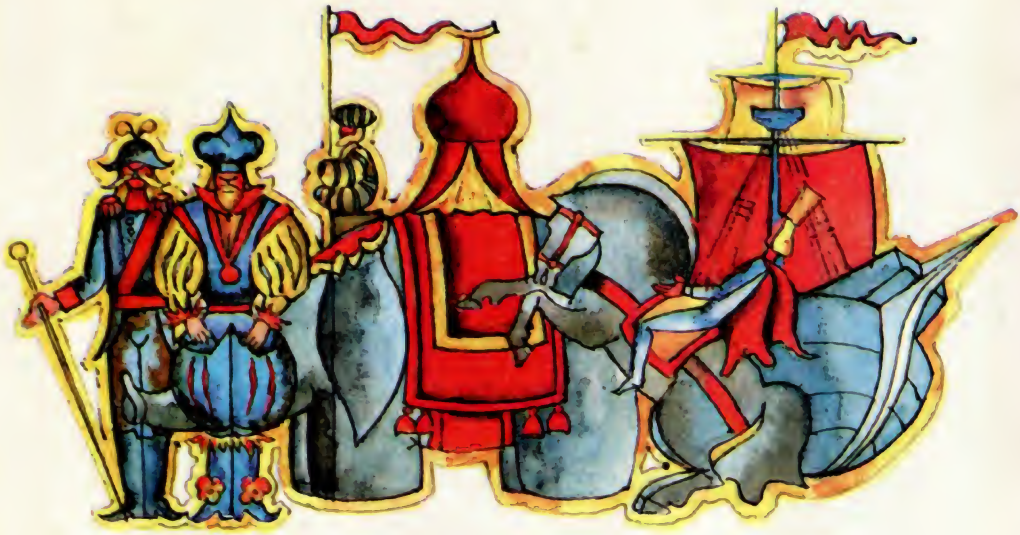
"How can you play when you don't know the rules?"

At that moment Peter's mother arrived to take him home for supper. Sasha and Boris sat looking at the chessmen all lined up, not knowing what to do with them.

Man to man, man to man—the small warriors were drawn up in some strange and wonderful order, their varnish gleaming like ancient armour. The little figures which only a few minutes ago had been flying all over the room, now seemed prepared for serious business. They stood, not in random fashion, but in a precise and rather mysterious formation. Any moment the command would be given and the serried ranks would be broken. How would it happen? What would the small warriors do on the checkered battlefield?

That night Sasha tossed and turned in bed for a long time, and when at last he fell asleep, a real chess battle took place before him. But however hard he tried to make out who was fighting whom, he was none the wis-

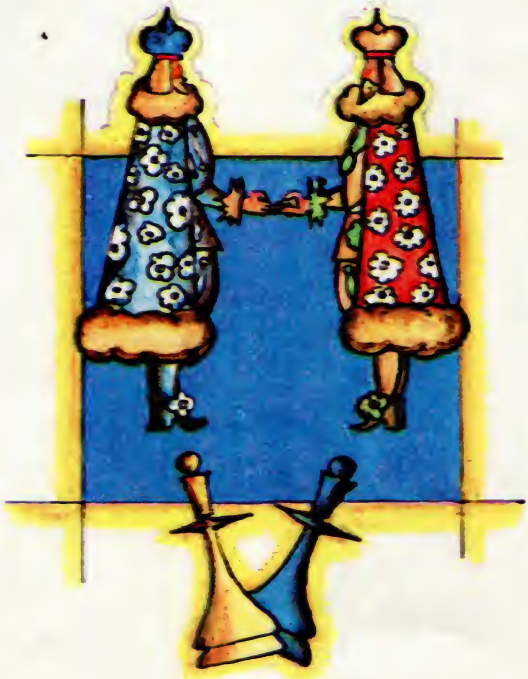




er. There was confusion on the battlefield and Sasha couldn't understand what was going on for he did not yet know how the chessmen were meant to behave.

Boris too thought about the beautiful chess armies standing motionless before the start of battle and he no longer had the desire to knock them down with a plastic missile.

A Revealing Story



The next day Sasha and Boris went out to play. Together with the other boys they slid down slopes and threw snowballs. On the hard-packed slippery snow they could play real ice hockey which was very different from knocking a ball around a room full of furniture. And someone had brought a real puck made of rubber although not all the boys had hockey sticks. Nor did speed skates flash under their feet. All in all, they were far from looking like the grown-up players seen on television. Still, it was great fun playing hockey! Sasha and Boris were the smallest and they were made goalkeepers. At first Boris objected—he wanted to hit the puck around himself. But you can't really argue with older boys and Boris had to take up his position between two bricks. Sasha stood at the other end of the pitch, a brick likewise on either side. They shifted from one foot to the other, constantly turning their heads so as not to lose sight of the puck flying across the pitch. Several times the puck soared so high over Sasha's head that he was unable to reach it even though he leapt up in the air. Then he said that the puck had gone over the posts and it wasn't a goal. And the boys didn't argue—not even when the rubber missile flew quite low over the posts; they knew their goalie was only small. But if he let the puck through below, it counted as a goal. It was particularly irritating when the black puck slipped through his legs—the boys looked at Sasha reproachfully and tears of annoyance welled up in his eyes.

But when Sasha managed to fend off the puck or hold it down on the ice, the older boys clapped him approvingly with their sticks just as real hockey players applaud their goalkeeper.

After the game was over all the children started making a snowman. Boris gave Sasha a gentle nudge and suggested in a low voice:

"Let's make snow chessmen..."

Sasha and Boris went to one side and deliberated which of the chessmen to make.

"Which man do you like best of all?" Boris asked.

"Which do you?"

"I like the Knight best—he's the most beautiful."

"And I like the Pawn," Sasha said hesitantly. "He's the smallest."

The friends set about their task. Boris quickly made a base on which he fashioned the neck of a chess horse. The head, though, turned out to be too short. Boris tried to make it longer, but the snow wouldn't hold and crumbled.

Sasha, meanwhile, built a fine Pawn with a strong round head.

Boris looked at Sasha's Pawn, then at his own Knight and said suddenly:

"All the same, a Knight is stronger than a Pawn!.."

Sasha thought that his Pawn was no worse than Boris's Knight and he replied tentatively:

"We don't know that yet..."

"We'll soon find out!" said Boris frowning. He stood beside Sasha rolling a snowball in his hands. "We'll soon find out!" Boris repeated and threw the snowball at the Pawn, hitting it on the head where it remained stuck like a protruding bump. This made Boris even more aggressive and he rolled

another snowball. The second "shot" displaced the Pawn's round head which, miraculously, did not part company with the thick snowy neck.

Sasha felt sorry for his little snow chessman and he too rolled a snowball. Wham—and the short head of Boris's horse became even shorter.

"So that's your game?" said Boris, advancing towards Sasha.

"What about *your* game?" Sasha countered, not giving way.

The two boys grappled in earnest and started pushing and shoving each other.

"Now then boys, that's against the rules!" they heard a stern grown-up voice saying. Looking round, Sasha and Boris saw Peter with his father—their "Uncle Max".

"What's all this then? You begin by making chessmen and finish up fighting?" Uncle Max sounded really annoyed. "In chess you fight with your head, not your hands."

"And not with snowballs..." Peter added. He was a very sensible boy and did not miss a chance of letting everyone know it. "At home they were knocking down chessmen with a plastic cube," Peter told his father.

"Don't you go telling on the boys," Uncle Max said smiling. "Otherwise they'll turn even redder..."

And indeed, even though Boris and Sasha had stopped pushing each other about, their faces were still red and their eyes sparkled. Peter announced pretentiously:

"Never mind, I'll teach them to play chess properly..."

"You?" said his father in surprise. "But you still don't know how to play properly yourself..."

"Yes, I do!" Peter insisted, now on the defensive. He didn't want to lose his authority as a chess expert.

"I know how you play," said his father with a faint smile. "It would be better if we all learned to play chess together. Come round, boys, when you've finished outside."

...And the boys soon had enough of running around. Flushed and dishevelled they appeared at the door of Peter's flat. He had his own corner for toys and books and the chess-board stood there on a small table. But Uncle Max invited Sasha and Boris to sit at the big table; to his son he said:

"Bring your soldiers over here."

Peter lifted the board with the pieces arranged on it and went over to the big table. The board in Peter's hand tilted to one side and the chessmen fell on the floor.

"Now that's clumsy," Peter's father sounded impatient, but he added quickly, "well, never mind, let the boys set up the pieces themselves—we'll see what you've taught them."

The boys quickly began to place the pieces on the board, just as Peter had shown them the previous day, but Uncle Max stopped them.

"Hold on! That's not right! You've put the board the wrong way round. Remember: there must always be a white corner square on the right of each player. Yes, that's right now..." He became thoughtful for a moment and then asked: "Boys, would you like me to tell you a story about chess?"

The boys, of course, were delighted. Who would not want to listen to a story about chess! The wooden pieces stood stiffly on the board as if they too were waiting to listen to a story.

...Long, long ago, in a far-off distant land there once lived a King who was neither good, nor just, nor wise. No doubt this was why he often waged war against his neighbours, trying to seize their fields, their gardens and their cities. One day the King planned a new campaign to conquer foreign riches, but uncertain of success, he decided to ask the advice of the oldest and wisest man in his kingdom and find out the truth. The white-bearded old man was brought to the palace and the King asked him:

"Listen, old man: I plan to go to war against my neighbours. Tell me, will my campaign be successful? Will I prove that I am stronger and wiser than other rulers? Will I destroy enemy armies and conquer new territories?"

The sage thought for a while and answered in these words:

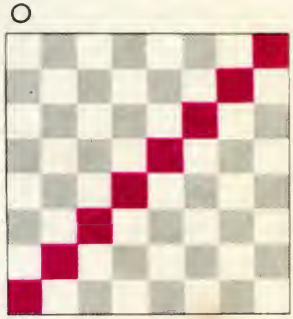
"Do not hurry, oh Sovereign! Before you embark on a big war, win a little one. Before you throw countless regiments into the thick of battle, learn how to command a toy army. Before you attempt to conquer large countries, master a tiny kingdom..."

"What are you babbling on about, old man?" demanded the King angrily. "What little war? What toy army? Where is this tiny kingdom?"

"It is here, oh mighty King," the old man answered calmly, taking a square checkered wooden board out of a bag and placing it in front of the throne.

"What sort of kingdom is that?" exclaimed the King, barely containing his rage. "You can't even take a step on it!"

"Forgive me, Sire, but you are wrong. See how many roads and paths there are here—you can travel in a straight line, obliquely, forwards, and backwards! And by commanding this army you can prove yourself to be a great general!"



The wise man emptied from the bag a large number of strange figures.

"Look closely at these small wooden figures, Sire! They are constantly at war, attacking, retreating, launching ambushes and having amazing adventures. But they are made of wood and therefore no blood is ever spilled here, no homes are destroyed and no orphans weep. This is where successful wars are fought! Learn to win this bloodless war and the fame of your wisdom will reach the furthermost corners of the land."

The King very much wanted to become renowned throughout the whole

world and he started learning to play chess—as the old man called this remarkable game.

"It is indeed a royal game," said the King pompously when he succeeded in winning. But when he lost he became angry and swept the chessmen onto the floor.

Such rough treatment offended the small wooden warriors and they began to revenge themselves on their capricious master: at the crucial moment of the battle first one then another piece would cease to obey their commander and move wherever they pleased, entirely disregarding the interests of the whole army. Then the King would be defeated and lose his temper, sweeping his army off the wooden battlefield. And the more he became angry and swept the pieces off the board, the more he lost. Neither in distant lands nor in his own kingdom was the King spoken of as a good, just and wise ruler. For what good, just and wise man will hurl his chessmen onto the floor and rage against those with whom he is playing?

The King grew tired of the toy battles which he so frequently lost and decided once again to test his strength in a real war. He dreamed of seizing great riches and annexing foreign lands to his kingdom. The King quickly mustered his infantry and cavalry regiments and at the head of his entire army marched against a neighbouring country. But the people of that country did not wish to become the slaves of a wicked and capricious ruler. As one man they rose to the defence of their homeland and defeated the King's horde. Only one small detachment was left out of his huge army. Hanging their heads in shame the troops who had survived the war returned home. More sombre than the blackest storm-cloud was the arrogant and cruel King who had suffered such a crushing defeat.

On his humiliating retreat the King met the wise man who had taught him how to wage chess warfare. Steering his horse towards the old man, the King said:

"You see, old man, how my campaign has ended?"

"I see, Your Majesty, I see," replied the old man. Did I not tell you it was better to wage a bloodless chess war?"

"You lie, you wretch!" said the King in anger. "But I shall gather a new army and prove to the whole world that there is no commander more expert than I!"

"Do not excite yourself, Sire", the sage answered calmly. "How can you command a large army when you have not even learned to master the small chess pieces?"

When the King heard these words he almost exploded in fury.

"Throw the old fool into the dungeon," he cried, "ban and burn his foul wooden game throughout the entire kingdom!"

Messengers galloped to the far corners of the kingdom proclaiming the terrible royal decree. The King's servants seized chess sets from people and made huge bonfires of them on public

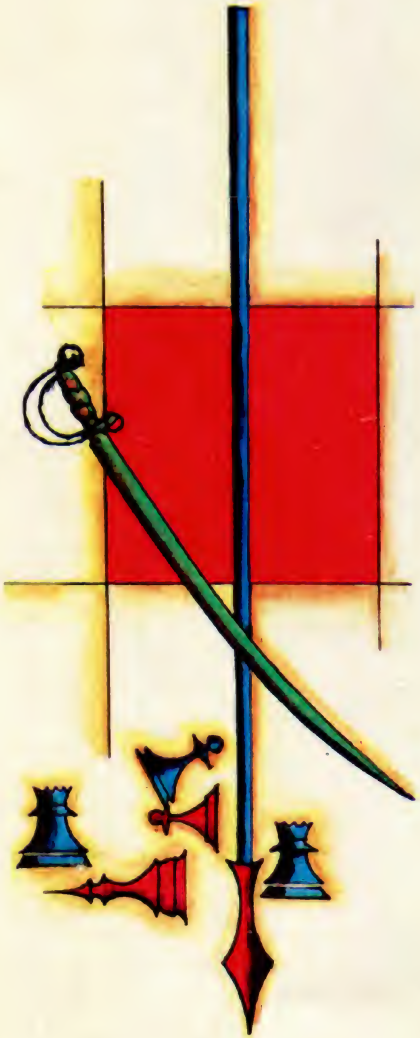
squares. But however much they tried, they did not succeed in collecting all the chess sets: peasants and artisans concealed their checker boards and their small chessmen although they were threatened with dire punishment if they were discovered. Simple people came to love this clever game. Meeting secretly, they set up the wooden pieces and led them into battle, saying to each other:

"Let's play the game which our King

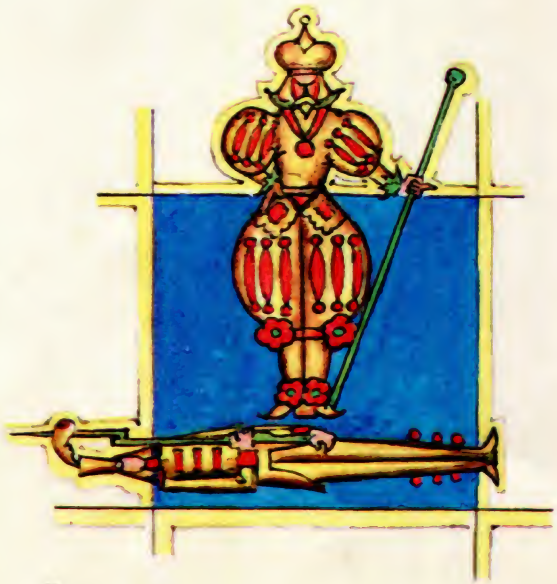
could not master. We would certainly have beaten him!.."

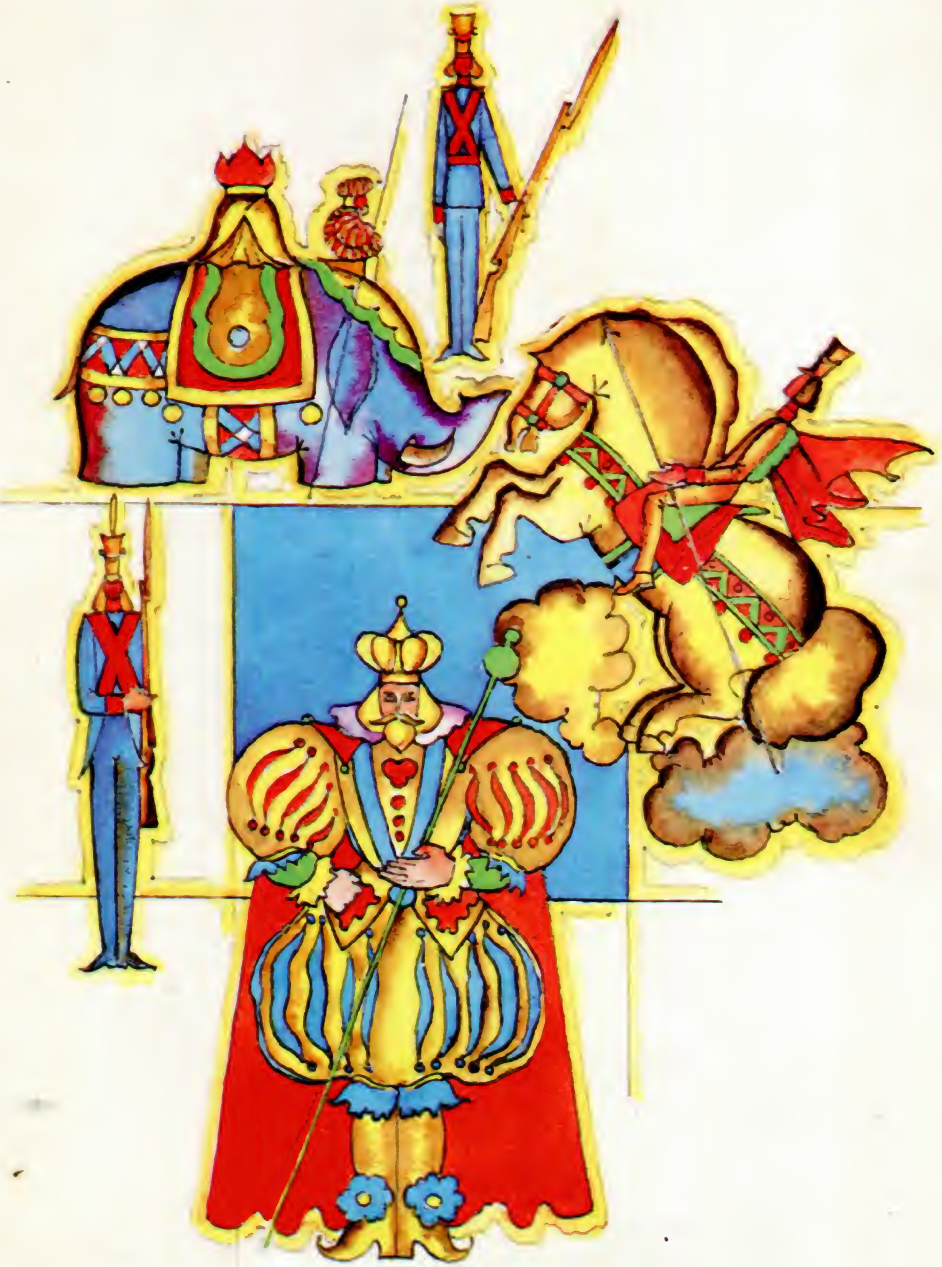
And whenever some small boy announced that he was going to become a great and dreaded commander, people would smile and advise him:

"First learn to command wooden soldiers before you tackle bigger things."



The Battlefield





The next time Sasha and Boris went round to see Peter, Uncle Max asked them:

"Did you understand, boys, why the chessboard seemed to the King no more than a small square although the wise man said it was a whole country?"

Sasha looked questioningly at Boris. Boris gazed thoughtfully at the ceiling. Peter came to his friends' assistance. Appearing from behind his father's back he said in a stage whisper:

"Because there are a lot of little squares on it..."

"Well, well, you haven't even started school yet, but you've already learned to come up with the answers", his father said. "I wanted Sasha and Boris to think for themselves." He took a sheet of paper and drew a square on it. "Look," he said, "it's just a square, there's not much room to spread yourself. But see what can happen." Uncle Max drew several lines from top to bottom and from left to right. "See how many squares there are now? However, they are all the same and that's rather boring..."

He quickly shaded in a corner square with a black pencil and leaving the one beside it blank, filled in the one next to it. Then once again he left a blank square and filled in the one beside that.

"It looks like a chess box," Boris said when Peter's father had filled in the last corner square.

"That's right. Only not a chess box but a chessboard. Look carefully, boys, and you will see how many rows of squares there are. Like roads they lead from top to bottom and from left to right, they can be straight or diagonal. The square was rather cramped but see how much space there is now!"

"There are whole streets for the chessmen," Boris observed.

"Yes, streets and lanes," Uncle Max agreed. "Only they're not called that. The rows of alternating black and white squares going from left to right are called *ranks* and those going from top to bottom are known as *files*. The chain of squares of the same colour—from corner to corner, see—is called a *diagonal*. Of course, that's a rather difficult word for you, but try to remember it all the same—you will find it very helpful later on."

"There's nothing special about the word 'diagonal'," Peter said quickly, anxious to show his superiority.

"Di-ag-on-al," Sasha and Boris repeated the word syllable by syllable. "Di-ag-on-al."

"Now count how many squares there are in a straight line".

Together the boys counted the number of squares.

"Eight," Boris announced.

"I make it eight too," Sasha said when he had finished counting.

"Correct. There are eight squares in each rank and file. And how many squares are there in a diagonal line?"

"They're all different..." Sasha and Boris said in one voice.

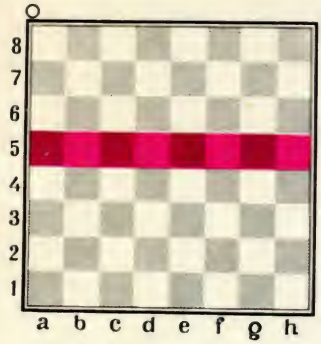
"Right again. Now, how many squares are there in the longest diagonal?"

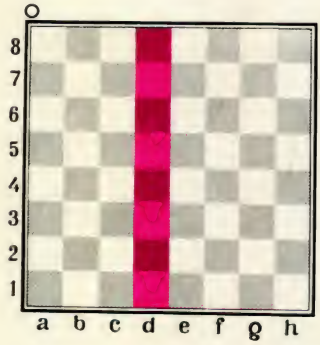
"Eight."

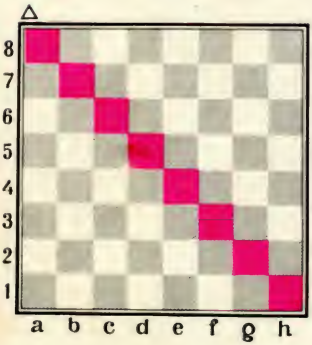
"And in the shortest?"

"Two."

The boys were delighted that they could already find their way along the







streets and lanes of the chessboard. But their acquaintance with this black and white country was only just beginning. In place of the ruled sheet of paper Peter's father opened out a real wooden board on the table. Next to it lay the light and dark-coloured chessmen which had been emptied out of the box. He took a Knight and placed it on the board.

"Imagine, Sasha, that this Knight has fallen from the board and I have picked it up," Uncle Max removed the Knight and pressed it in his palm. "Now, tell me, where was the Knight standing?"

Sasha looked at Uncle Max in dismay, Boris and Peter didn't know either how to explain where the Knight had stood.

"There you are, you see,—you can't explain the position of just one single Knight, although it's very easy for chessplayers to do. They can even reconstruct a whole battle and show all the movements and adventures of the little wooden men. The fact is that each square has its own symbol, that is, its own name."

Uncle Max set up the White chessmen. The first rank was occupied by Rooks, Knights, Bishops, the King and the Queen while the Pawns were lined up in front of them.

"You know already that there are eight ranks on the board. They are called first rank, second rank, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth. They are counted from the near end of the board where the White army is positioned—the white pieces occupy the first rank and the White Pawns stand

in the second rank. In which ranks is the Black army lined up?"

Boris counted the ranks. He said that the Black Pawns should stand in the seventh rank and the Black pieces in the eighth.

"You certainly know how to count!"

"Of course, we do!" the boys answered in chorus.

"That makes everything a lot easier, but the ABC of chess consists of more than just numbers. To begin with, all the White Pawns stand in the second rank. But how can you tell them apart? Do you say—the one fourth from the left or second from the right? That's too long and complicated. Chess-players have made it a lot easier: the horizontal lines—the ranks—are numbered from one to eight, while the vertical lines—the files—are lettered from A to H. Do you know all the letters of the alphabet, boys?"

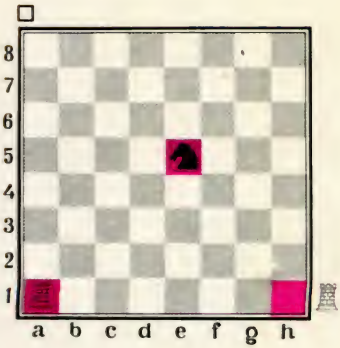
"The whole lot, of course!" Peter confirmed, feeling offended that his father had even asked.

"Again, you're jumping in before the others. Sasha and Boris are younger than you, you know. What about you, lads, do you know the alphabet?"

The boys nodded their heads. But then Sasha admitted that some of the letters confused him.

"Well, that's nothing to worry about—you'll get used to them!"

Peter's father explained that the first file from the bottom black corner square to the top white corner square was designated by the letter "a" and the second file by the letter "b". The third file of squares had the letter "c", the



fourth—the letter "d", the fifth the letter "e" and the sixth—the letter "f". That left two more files which had the letters "g" and "h".

The children looked bored—the language of chess seemed to them difficult and uninteresting. Uncle Max noticed that their attention was wandering.

"What's the matter, boys, are you fed up? It's not all as complicated as it seems. You see, now we can give each square an exact name. Let's take the bottom

square in the left corner as an example. It is located in file 'a' and rank '1'. Therefore the square will be called square 'a1'. Do you see? At the beginning of the game square 'a1' will be occupied by one of the White Rooks. On which square does the other White Rook stand?"

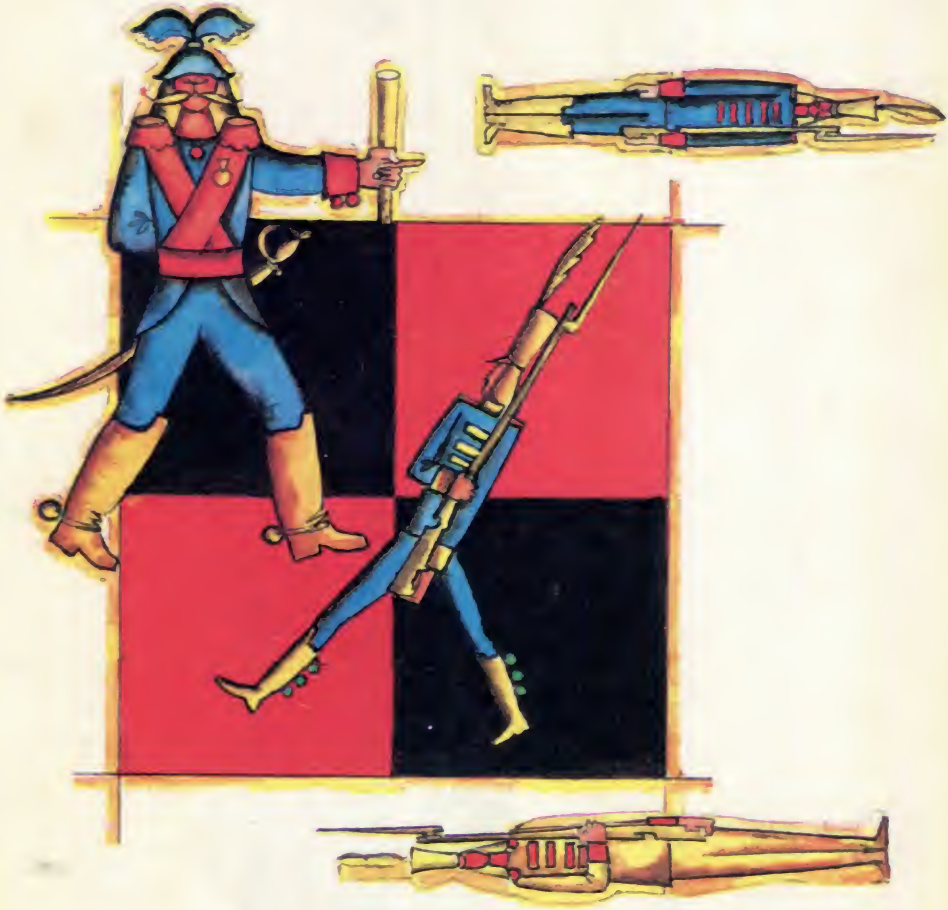
"On square 'h first'."

"No, you don't say 'h first' but 'h one'," Peter's father corrected them. "You see, if Sasha knew the language of chess he could easily tell me where to put the Knight. The Knight which I removed was standing on square e5. But I see that you're tired and besides it's quite late."

"When will we start playing?" Sasha asked timidly.

"Soon, Sasha, very soon!"

Only Straightforward!



The next morning Sasha couldn't remember the name of the last chess letter. He thought so hard about it that he even stopped munching his big red apple. Suddenly the last chess letter came to him: "H"! Sasha pronounced triumphantly. His mother looked at him anxiously and put her hand on his forehead—perhaps he had a temperature? Unperturbed, Sasha went on munching his apple. "'H'—is the last chess letter," he explained. "I just couldn't remember it." His mother didn't ask any questions, otherwise Sasha would certainly have been late for nursery school. At nursery school Sasha and Boris used letters in a different way. Together with the other children they formed words with lettered bricks.

...The chess lessons had suddenly come to a stop. Sasha and Boris found out that Peter's father had gone away on business. Peter consoled the disappointed boys:

"It doesn't matter that Dad isn't here. I'll show you how the Pawn moves. It's really very easy."

Peter set up the chessmen in the starting position. The wooden army stood in serried ranks and seemed only to be waiting for the command to commence battle. Peter took a White Pawn and moved it forward two squares.

"Pawns march forward one square at a time," he explained, trying not to sound too self-important.

"You say they move one square at a time, but you've just moved that Pawn two squares forward," Boris hastened to "expose" his teacher. Peter looked at Boris in annoyance, but restrained himself.

"Only once in the game, on its first move, can a Pawn advance two squares. After that, just one square at a time. And it always moves forward in a straight line—forward and straight."

Peter took the same Pawn and moved it forward another square, then another. When the Pawn advanced one step forward it moved from a white square to a black and then back to a white square.

After three moves the White Pawn came up against a Black Pawn standing on its own square. Peter then whisked all the Black chessmen from the board so that they did not interfere with his demonstration of how Pawns move.

"The Pawn always marches straightforward and if it comes up against another Pawn or piece, it can't move any further."

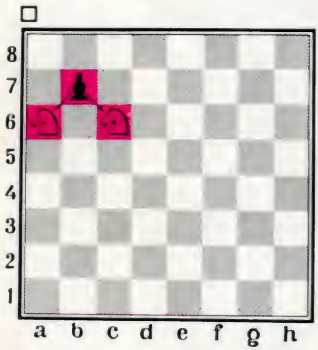
"Why not let it knock down the Black Pawn?" Boris suggested.

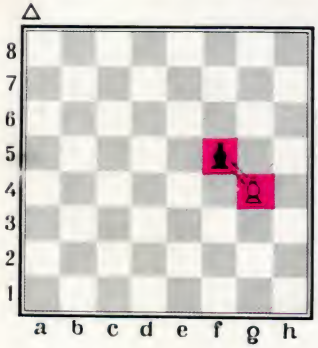
"No, that's against the rules. I can only capture diagonally—to either side of the square it occupies." Peter placed the Black Pawn diagonally in front of the White Pawn. "If it is White to move, the White Pawn can capture the Black, but if it's Black's turn, then the Black Pawn can capture the White. Do you see?"

He first removed the Black Pawn and put the White one on its square. Then he put both Pawns back, removed the White one and put the Black one in its place. It turned out that either Pawn can capture the other, depending on whether it is Black or White to move first. Once again Peter put the White Pawn in the middle of the board and diagonally in front of it he placed

on one side a Black Pawn and on the other a Black Knight.

"And now the Pawn can capture either to the left or to the right. Which would you rather capture, Sasha, the Pawn or the Knight?"





"The Knight," Sasha answered hesitantly.

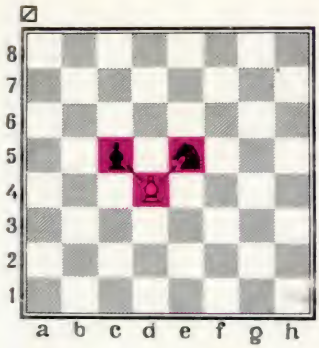
"That's right, it's better to take a Knight because he's more important than a Pawn," the "teacher" said approvingly.

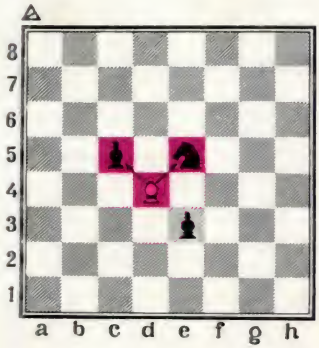
Then Boris took another Black Pawn and placed it on a square diagonal to the White Pawn, only this time behind the White Pawn rather than in front of it.

"Can White capture the Black Pawn in that position?"

"No, a Pawn always moves forward and can never capture a man standing behind it. Now look," Peter placed the White Pawn on square a2 and the Black on square b7, "which Pawn do you think will win here?"

"White will win," Sasha said, because Peter had spent the whole time showing them how the White Pawn captures Black pieces.





"Well, let's see then," Peter suggested. "White to move!"

Sasha cautiously advanced his Pawn one square while Peter moved his Black Pawn two squares forward. When Sasha once again moved his Pawn it landed on a square diagonally opposite the Black and Peter captured it.

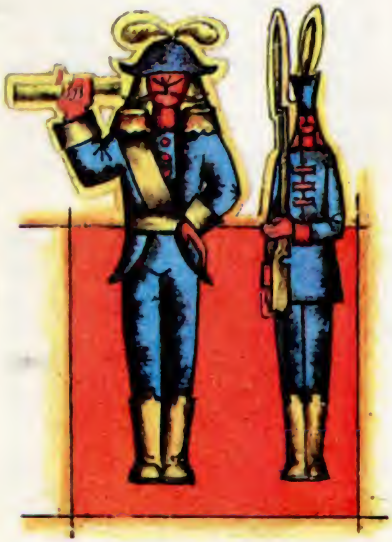
"Can we try once more?" Sasha asked. "Now I know how I have to move."

And he resolutely marched the Pawn two squares forward. But in response Peter moved his Pawn only one square and again it turned out that with the next move Sasha had to place his Pawn under attack. Peter smiled:

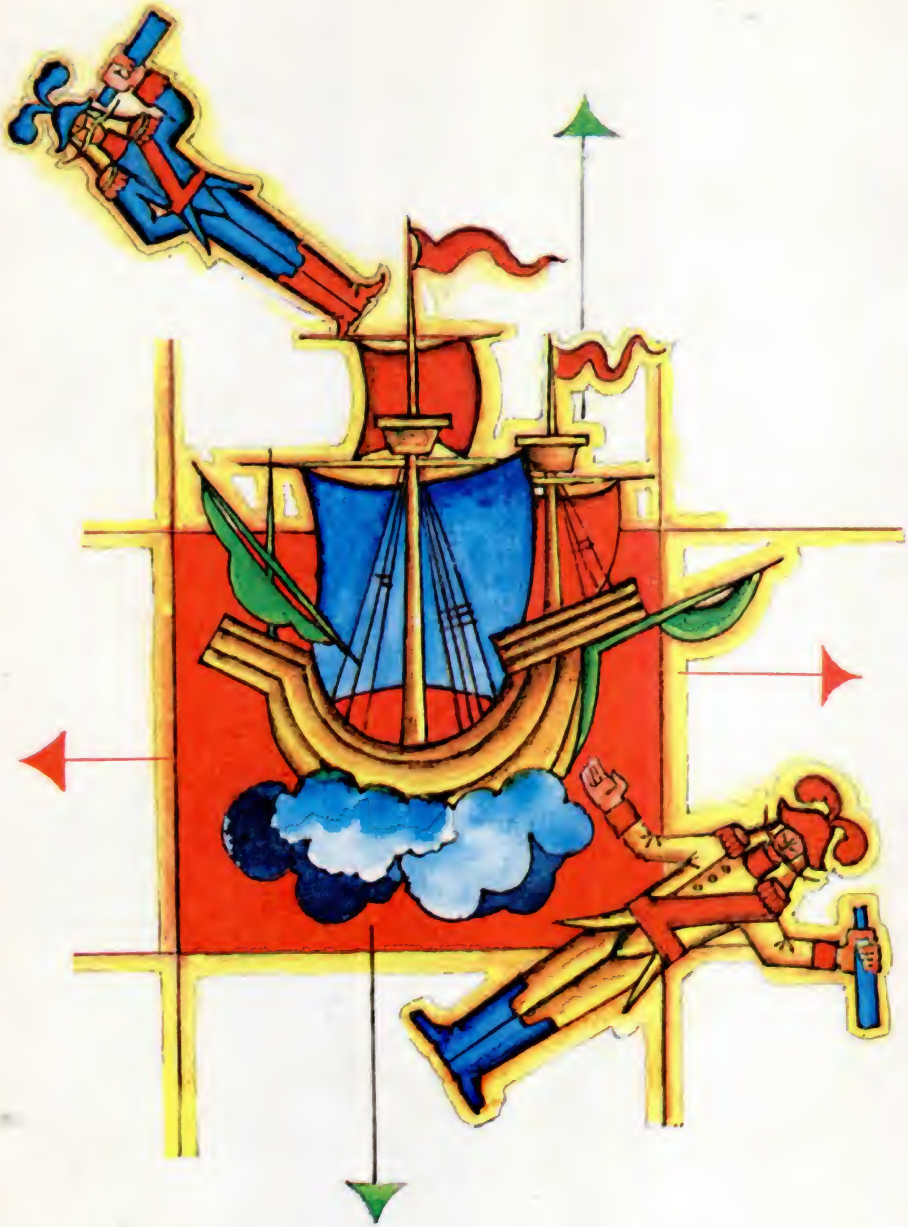
"Do you see how it is? In this position whoever makes the first move, loses. You know, boys," Peter went on, "I still haven't told you about one very important rule. You think that the Pawn is the smallest and weakest man on the board? Well, it's not true. It is only small and weak until it reaches the other end of the board. But as soon as it reaches the last rank, it can become another piece."

"How can it become another piece?" Sasha and Boris asked at the same time.

"Very easily: you remove the Pawn from the board and replace it in the eighth rank with any piece you like: a Queen, a Rook, a Knight or a Bishop. You can't replace it with a King though, because there are never two Kings in one army. And you can't replace the Pawn with another Pawn either because a Pawn doesn't move backwards and it can't move any further forward."



Who Has Been Placed in the Corner?



Step by step Sasha moved forward resolutely. The further he went, the more enemies there were. They threatened to knock Sasha off his feet, to wipe him off the face of the earth. But he didn't retreat a single step—forward, only straightforward! The Black enemy cavalry charged past, menacing castles approached, the enemy infantry attacked. One of his opponents was very close to Sasha, almost diagonally opposite. Sasha contrived to capture the enemy and occupy his place. And once again he moved forward, step by step. Sasha forced his way through the thick of battle to the enemy's rear. And the commander said to him:

"Well done, Sasha! You are the bravest and the fastest soldier. But you don't have to move on foot and force your way forward any more. Now you can become a cavalryman, a member of a tank crew or a gunner. You can even become a great commander. Choose which you want to be!"

Sasha's heart was bursting with pride and joy. How good it was to feel oneself intrepid, to know that one has done one's duty well! But what should he become? It was tempting to be a dashing cavalryman, but at the same time he wanted to be a great general. "Am I capable though?" Sasha thought... and woke up. He woke up realising that he had dreamed of a chess game in which he, Sasha, was a Pawn—a daring little Pawn who had forced his way through to the last rank and then not known which piece to turn into.

That evening Peter called to say that his father had asked Sasha to come round.

"Your father is back then?" Sasha was overjoyed.

"Yes, he arrived yesterday," Peter confirmed. "Let's go."

Uncle Max himself opened the door and seeing Sasha, he said:

"So you're alone are you, my lad? Better to command a full force though. Go and fetch Boris."

Boris too was delighted that he had been summoned and in a few minutes the boys were sitting at the table with the chessboard in front of them.

"Peter told us how the Pawn moves," Boris said.

Peter looked down at the floor as though he had committed some offence.

"But I didn't explain which piece the Pawn should become when it reaches the last rank."

"What is there to explain?" his father said in surprise. "A Queen, of course!"

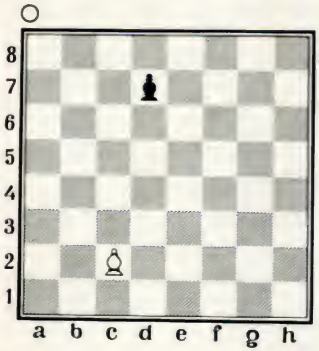
"But the rules say that it can be promoted into any piece, don't they?"

"That's right. But it is rare to replace the Pawn with a Knight, a Rook or a Bishop. Think of a Pawn becoming a Queen! But I believe you already know how that happens," he put a White Pawn on square c2 and a Black Pawn on e7. "Now, chess-players, which Pawn will turn into a Queen first? As always, White begins."

"White will be first," Sasha and Boris calculated rapidly.

"And now?" Uncle Max moved the Black Pawn to d7.

Sasha wanted to say that it would again be the White Pawn, for it had been the first to move off, but he felt there was some sort of catch. This time



Boris wasn't in a hurry to answer either—Uncle Max must have moved the Pawn for a good reason.

Sasha leaned over the board. He tried to imagine these two Pawns moving towards each other. Boris glanced at Peter and saw that he was looking at them impatiently. By way of encouragement Peter said: "Well, come on then!"

Suddenly Boris remembered that last time Peter had shown them this very position and he announced gleefully:

"The Black Pawn will become a Queen!"

"Why? After all, White is first to move..."

"Because the Black Pawn will capture the White Pawn! Shall I show you?"

Sasha too saw what would happen and he smiled with relief.

"I see that Peter has taught you something after all. Only don't you get swollen-headed, my lad. And now, let's get to know the other pieces. Which pieces occupy all the coorner squares on our board?"

"The Rooks! The Rooks!" shouted the boys in high spirits.

Uncle Max took a Black Rook and placed him on the empty board.

"The Rook has a straight character: he moves only in straight lines—forward, backward, left and right—and he can move any distance. If a hostile man stands in the path of a Rook, the Rook can capture him and occupy his square. But if a friendly man blocks his path, the Rook cannot move.

"The Rook is not happy when he is hemmed in. Now look. The Black Pawn is threatening the Rook who, even though he is in the centre of the board, has nowhere to go because all his avenues of escape are obstructed by friendly Pawns."

"But the Rook himself can capture the Black Pawn," Sasha observed, leaning over the board to show which Pawn could be taken by the Rook.

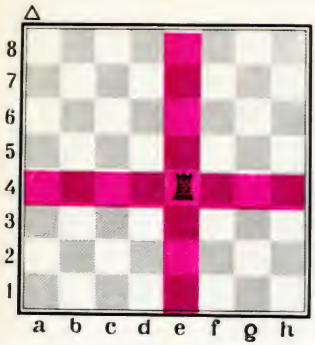
"What are you doing—have you forgotten the rule 'head and not hands'? Which square is this Pawn standing on?"

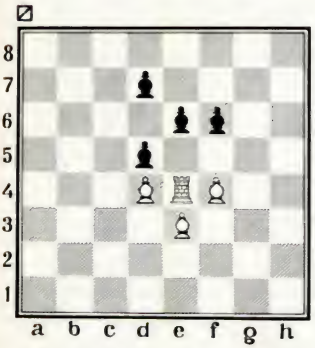
"On e6," Sasha worked out quickly.

"Then the other Black Pawn will capture the Rook," Boris said.

"Well, so what? There will still be an equal number of pieces!"

"No, Sasha, it's not advantageous to sacrifice a Rook for a Pawn because





a Rook is much more powerful. A Rook is worth approximately five Pawns. Yes, it's true, don't look so surprised. A Rook can sweep across the whole board and inflict severe losses on the enemy."

"But a Pawn can become a Queen!" Sasha tried to stick up for the smallest of the fighting men.

"These wonderful transformations don't happen all that often and then only at the end of a game. At the start and in the middle the Pawn is still much weaker than the other pieces. And very many Pawns are lost in a chess battle. But don't be upset, Sasha, it's only a game after all."

With bold sweeping strokes Peter's father moved the Rook from place to place, showing how he could dominate the board. Then he put Black Pawns on a7, b7 and c7 and a White Rook on the corner square h8.

"Now, how are you going to attack the Pawns?"

Boris suggested moving the Rook to a8, but Uncle Max moved the Pawn forward one square where it was protected by the other Pawn.

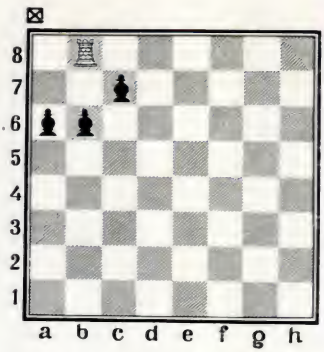
Boris then attacked the adjacent Pawn, but Peter's father again moved forward one square so that Pawn "b" was now protected by its neighbour Pawn "c".

Boris stubbornly continued to attack the Pawns from behind and moved the Rook to c8, but this Pawn too moved forward not one but two squares, and Boris saw that it could not be taken because the Pawn on b6 would then capture the Rook.

"It will take a long time before you manage to capture any of the Pawns because you're not attacking them in the right way. When Pawns stand in the same rank it is better to attack them from the side. Like this."

Uncle Max placed the Rook on h7.

Now both Sasha and Boris saw clearly that however the Black Pawns



moved one of them would be lost in the next move, and then it would be a bad lookout for the other two.

"The Rook is a powerful piece," Peter's father observed. "But he needs space—open ranks and files."

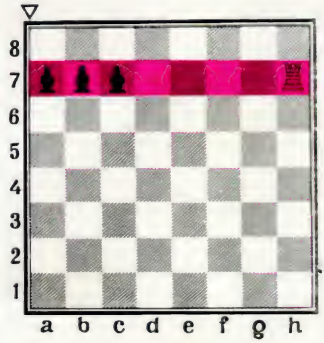
"How do you mean—open?" Boris asked in surprise.

"Open ranks and files are those in which there are neither friendly nor hostile men. But we still don't know everything about the Rook.

"It is said that at one time the Rooks were placed in the centre, in front of the Pawns. The militant Rooks immediately rushed into battle, but they could not go very far—they were surrounded by friendly and hostile men, they were hemmed in! The Rooks lumbered around in the midst of this throng and got in the way of their own army. Then it was decided to hide them in the corners—not as a punishment, but so that they should not come out too soon and wait until there was space for them to move freely. Maybe it wasn't all quite like that, but it is certainly true that Rooks should not rush into battle."

Sasha pictured the Rook moving importantly and majestically along the deserted streets of the chessboard—he was such a straightforward, easy-to-understand piece. He moved only in straight lines and would never dream of cutting a corner.

When the two boys left Peter's flat, Sasha set off for home in a straight line—just like a Rook.



Leaping Horses

Sasha and Boris wanted to find out about the Knight as soon as possible. He seemed to them the most attractive of the pieces. What about the Rook though? It's easy to understand how he moves, but who is he exactly, what can he be compared with? A tank? A connon? Yes and no. He's a vague sort of piece really. The Knight is quite another matter! You see him immediately as a dashing cavalryman, the horse under him rearing up, prancing and shying to one side. And when the time comes he charges into battle, leaping over obstacles. But how does the Knight behave on the chessboard? Once, when they were playing outside, Peter told them that the Knight moves in the shape of the letter "L", which didn't really make it any clearer. So the boys waited impatiently until the next time Peter's father talked to them about chess. They hoped it would be the Knight's turn—after all, he stood beside the Rook. Just in case it was, Sasha repeated to himself "b one", "g one", "b eight", "g eight"—the symbols for the squares occupied by the Knights at the beginning of the game. Where would they gallop off to?

On the table lay the board with the chessmen already set up for play. A solid row of Pawns protected the pieces.

"No piece can move until the Pawns open up a path for him," Uncle Max said. "No piece, that is, except the Knight. The Knight is not a long-distance fighter, but he is very adroit and can leap over the other men. The Knight's move is the most difficult of all to remember, but unless you do, you won't be able to play chess. Watch carefully: the Knight moves like this: two squares out and one over. Forward and to the side, forward and to the side—in any direction. And if a piece is standing in front of him, the Knight leaps over it."

Peter's father put the Knight which was standing on square b1 onto square c3 and then played for Black, moving the Knight from b8 to c6. The other White Knight jumped from g1 to f3 and the Black horse opposite responded with a similar leap—from g8 to f6.

"You see, the Pawns remain in position but the Knights have already en-

tered the game. The Knight's move is like the letter 'L'".

"If an enemy piece is standing in front of the Knight, can the Knight take it?" Sasha and Boris wanted to know there and then.

"No, the Knight captures only on the squares to which he jumps. Look at the board. The Knight can capture any of these pieces. He can choose any one he pleases... Where must you put the Knight now if he is to capture any of the Black Pawns?"

Boris was the first to come up with the answer. He said that the White Knight should move to f5.

"And where has the Knight the least number of moves?"

"In the corner!" Sasha and Boris replied.

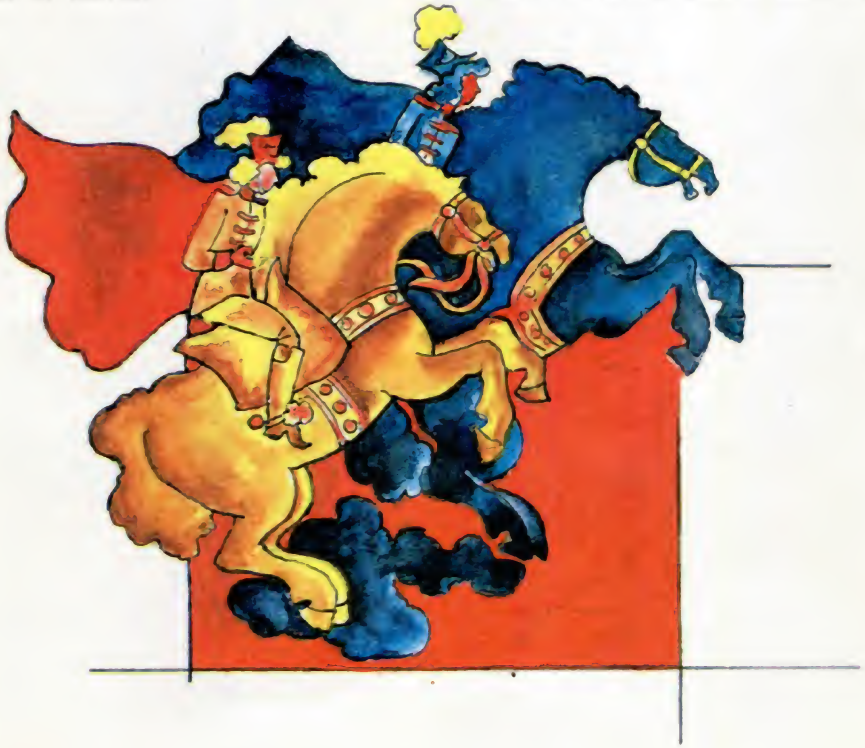
"That's right. To put a Knight in a corner is to punish him severely. From a corner he has only two moves and can easily be captured there."

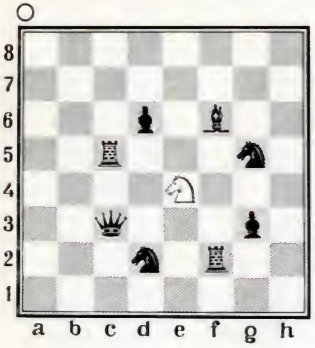
"But how can he be taken if he can leap over pieces?" Peter asked unexpectedly. Usually, he tried not to ask questions for he considered that he already knew practically everything.

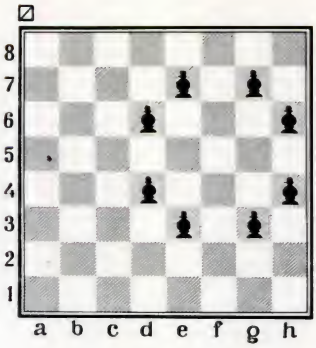
"And you, the teacher, don't know?" Peter's father narrowed his eyes craftily. "If I attack your Knight what will you do?"

"Move him to another square."

"And if enemy pieces can capture







your Knight on whichever square he jumps to?"

Peter shrugged his shoulders, looking displeased.

"Then the Knight will be captured. To capture a Knight you have to attack him and at the same time cut off all his escape routes. And this is easiest to do when the Knight is in a corner. See how the two Rooks have trapped the Knight?

"A Rook and a Pawn can capture a Knight like this.

"Even Pawns alone can capture a cornered horse."

"So that's a horse for you!" Boris said disappointedly. "Anyone can capture him... Is he the weakest piece then?"

"Yes, the Knight is very unhappy in a corner. But when he is at large he is extremely adroit and can cause a lot of unpleasantness. You've just seen that in the centre of the board the Knight threatens eight squares at the same time. And what if these squares are occupied by hostile men? Imagine the alarm it will cause! When a Knight attacks two or more pieces it is called a 'Pin'."

"See, it really is like a fork pronging both Rooks at the same time. Black can only move one Rook, the other remains on the 'Pin' and is captured."

"A 'Pin' can also have another wider shape. These are 'Pins' with two prongs; who can show me a 'Pin' with four prongs?"

It occured to Sasha that if two "Pins" were joined you would get a "Pin" with four prongs.

He said what he thought and Peter's father was quick to praise him.

"But which piece is more powerful—the Knight or the Rook?" Sasha wanted to know. He had now become rather fond of the clever adroit horse and wanted the Knight to be stronger than the obstinate Rook who only moved in straight lines.

But Uncle Max's reply disappointed Sasha.

"It can sometimes happen that the Knight is stronger than the Rook, but the Rook is nearly always the more powerful. The Rook is very fast-moving, he can get to any square in two moves. Now count, how many moves must the Knight make to get from the a1 corner to the h8 corner?"

The two boys started counting how many times the Knight would have to make his L-shaped move to complete the journey. But it was difficult to envisage all the Knight's leaps and the boys got in a muddle. Then Boris put a White Knight in the corner and started moving him across the board. He found that the quickest the Knight could move from one corner to another was in six leaps.

There was certainly no way he could keep up with the Rook.

For some reason Sasha thought of the little pony at the zoo on which the children had rides. By comparison the Rook seemed like a heavy lorry thundering along the motorway.

When he was back at home Sasha came to the conclusion that the Knight was nonetheless a very interesting piece. Who else could leap so jauntily over the columns of friendly and hostile soldiers, who else could so skilfully catch out the enemy on a 'Pin'? Sasha hopped across the parquet floor that was checkered like a chessboard. Each hop was in the shape of the letter "L"—forward and to the side, forward and to the side.

"Lightweight" Bishops

If Sasha had been told that Bishops were only "lightweight" pieces he would never have believed it. But it turned out that in chess Bishops, like Knights, are called minor pieces while Queens and Rooks are known as major pieces. It was Peter who told him about the lightweight Bishops because his father had once again gone away on business. He also said that a Bishop needs only half the board. While they were playing outside Peter told them so many interesting things that Sasha and Boris could hardly wait to sit down with him at the chessboard. Peter explained to the boys that Bishops can only move diagonally, on those very diagonal lines which they had learned about when they became acquainted with the chessboard. The Bishop who stands initially on a black square, will move only on black diagonal squares throughout the game and is known as the black-squared Bishop. In each chess army there is one black-squared Bishop and one white-squared Bishop who, from the very start, moves only on the white diagonal squares of the chessboard.

"Why is it said," Peter asked them, "that each Bishop needs only half the board?"

Sasha and Boris looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders.

"Because", Peter explained, "the Bishop only moves on diagonal squares of the same colour; the other squares, the other half of the board are inaccessible to him. Do you understand?"

Peter's explanation was not really very clear to the boys: the board couldn't be cut up into black and white squares for then there would be no board at all—only separate diagonals lying around! Peter sensed that once again he was not proving to be a very good chess teacher and he tried to put things right.

"I'd better tell you how the Bishop fights. Where does the Bishop have the greatest number of moves?"

"In the middle..." Boris was the first to answer.

"That's right, in the centre of the board. And from which squares?"

"From d4 and e5," Sasha said.

"No, from e4 and d5," Boris objected.

The boys glared at each other,—both were convinced they were right. Peter burst out laughing:

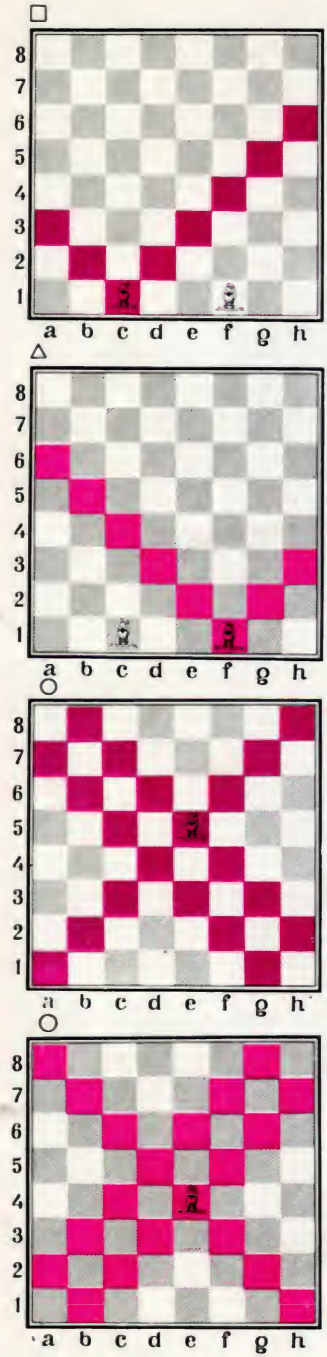
"Yes, you're both right! The black-squared Bishops have the greatest number of moves from d4 and e5 and the white-squared Bishops—from e4 and d5. Look: all these squares are on the longest diagonals. How many long diagonals are there on the board?"

"Two!" Sasha and Boris came out with the answer at the same time.

"Yes, one white and one black. Bishops are happiest on these two long diagonals. Here they are like long-range guns, they fire across the whole battlefield."

"You promised to tell us why Bishops are called minor pieces," Sasha reminded him.

"Bishops and Knights are called minor pieces because they are weaker than Rooks and Queens which are known as major pieces. And perhaps also because Knights and Bishops enter the battle earlier while the major pieces are still only preparing for the fight."



"But why is the Bishop weaker than the Rook?" Boris wanted to know.

"The Rook sweeps across the whole board! But the Bishop..." Peter smiled, "Well, you can see for yourselves: the Bishop has only one half of the board open to him. He cannot move onto a square of a different colour and he is less useful than the Rook."

"Does it sometimes happen that the Rook has nowhere to move on a straight line while the Bishop can move on a diagonal?" Sasha asked.

"Yes, it does. Then the Bishop is stronger than the Rook. But the Rook is nearly always the more powerful," Peter added knowledgeably, trying to sound like his father. "That is why it is not advantageous to exchange a Rook for a Bishop."

"What about exchanging a Bishop for a Knight?"

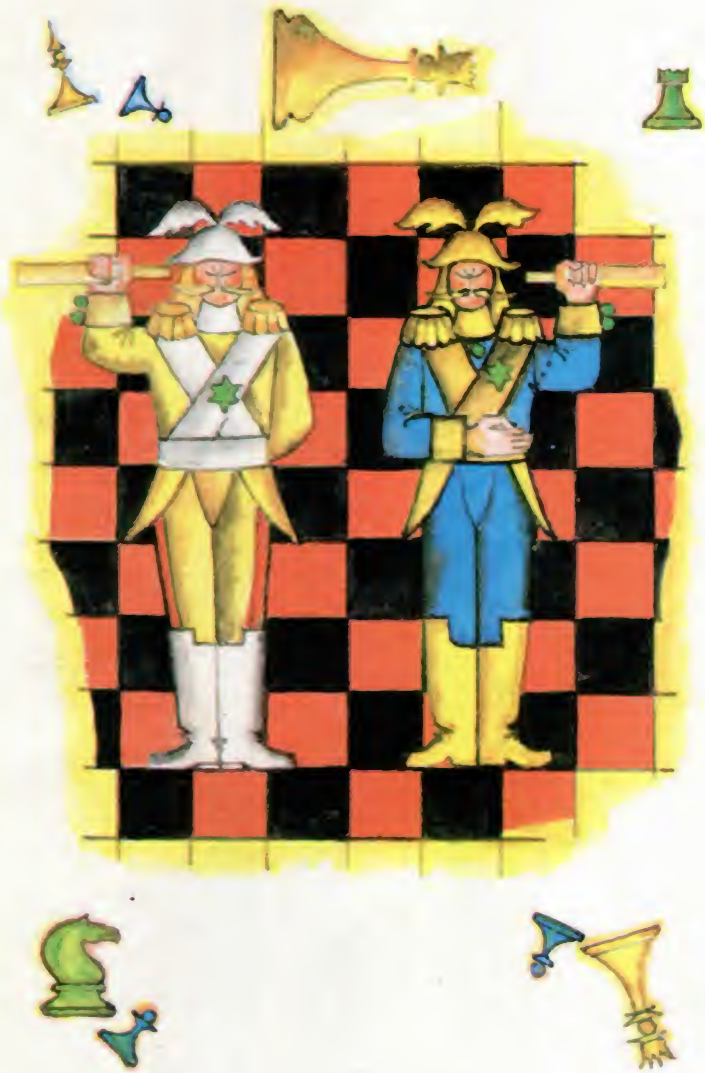
"That's all right. The Bishop and the Knight are equal in value."

Peter became thoughtful. He tried to remember what else his father had said about the Bishop, but he couldn't recall anything more.

"I'd better tell you about the Queen. Oh, what a powerful piece she is! Or maybe it would be better if Dad told you about the Queen?" Peter doubted his own powers. Sasha and Boris also thought it would be better if Uncle Max talked to them about such a powerful piece and they didn't prevail on Peter.

While he was having supper Sasha thought that Bishops probably found it very boring moving all the time on squares of the same colour and that they must somehow feel restricted in these diagonal cages.

The Most Powerful Piece



"Now boys," Peter's father said when once again they had all gathered round the big table on which the chessboard was set up, "what did Professor Peter tell you about the Bishops?"

Peter looked at Sasha and Boris as if to say: "Well, go on then, tell him!"

Peter, Boris volunteered, hadn't really said all that much about the Bishops, but what he told them they had understood. Sasha nodded in agreement.

"What else is there to say about them?" Peter asked defensively. "They move on their own diagonals and that's all there is to it..."

"It's not quite as simple as you think," Peter's father commented. "Did you tell the boys how the Bishops fight?"

Sasha and Boris remembered that he had not.

"Bishops move and attack on their own diagonals," Uncle Max said. "The longer the diagonal, the more dangerous the Bishop. Like the other pieces, the Bishop occupies the square of the hostile man he has captured. How can you escape from a Bishop then?"

"Move off the diagonal," Boris jumped in with the answer.

"That's right, but it isn't always so easy to do. Look: the Bishop is threatening the Rook on d5, but if he moves the other Black Rook will be taken. Now let's play with the Bishop against two Pawns," he arranged the pieces. "How can the Bishop best attack the Pawns?"

"From b1," Sasha suggested.

In reply Peter's father moved the Pawn to e3. Sasha put the Bishop on d3 to prevent the Pawn from moving any further. But Uncle Max advanced the other Pawn to f3. Now Sasha found he couldn't stop Pawn "e" from reaching the last rank.

"You've lost, but you could have won you know", Peter's father demonstrated that attack should have come not from b1, but from behind, from d5.

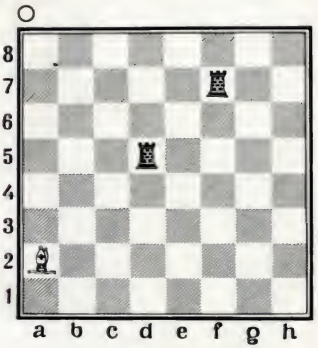
If the Pawn had then moved to e3, the Bishop would have taken up his position on f3 and the Black Pawns would have been captured one after the other.

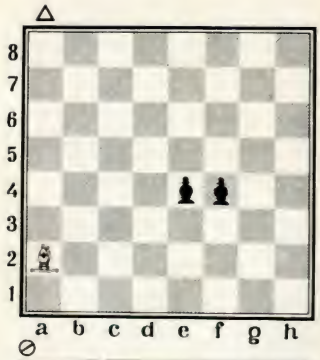
If Black had tried to force his way through to the last rank with Pawn "f", the Bishop would have taken one Pawn and succeeded in blocking the other.

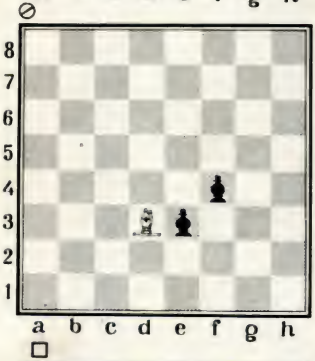
"You see," said Uncle Max, "you have to be skilful when you fight with Bishops. And now, lads, the time has come to introduce you to the most powerful piece in the chess kingdom—the Queen".

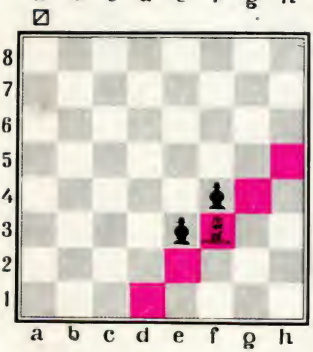
"I thought the King was the most powerful," Sasha admitted.

"The King is certainly the most important, but he is not really so powerful. The most powerful of all is the Queen. She can win against any other piece and even against two or three pieces together. Why? Because the









Queen can move like the Rook and the Bishop—on straight lines and diagonals. Imagine how many squares are accessible to her at one and the same time!"

He removed all the pieces from the board and put the White Queen on e4. In his mind each boy traced the paths which led up, down, to the right, to the left and diagonally across the white squares.

"So, boys, you've seen that the Queen can move like the Rook and like the Bishop. She can attack a Rook on a diagonal and a Bishop on a straight line, while she herself remains safe."

"Dad, tell them how many pieces the Queen is worth," Peter begged.

"Oh, the Queen is a very valuable piece! She is roughly equal to two Rooks. How many of the minor pieces do you think can be exchanged for a Queen?"

"Probably three..." Sasha suggested timidly.

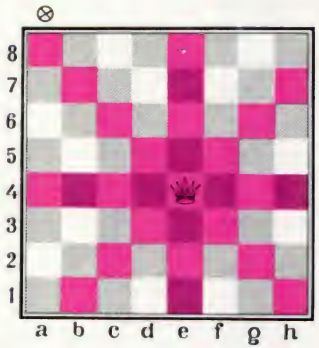
"Yes, three minor pieces are approximately equal in strength to a Queen. But only if they are well protected. If the Knights and Bishops are scattered over the board, anyone of them can easily be captured by the Queen. In this position for example: the White Queen moves to e4 and threatens all the Black pieces at the same time. As Black cannot save them all from attack in one move, one of the pieces will be captured.

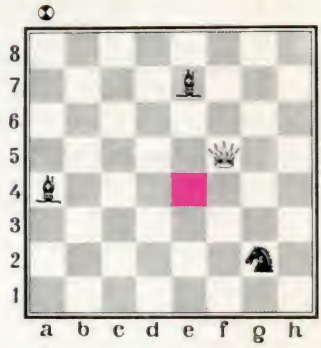
"What move will the White Queen have to make here to win one of the Black pieces?"

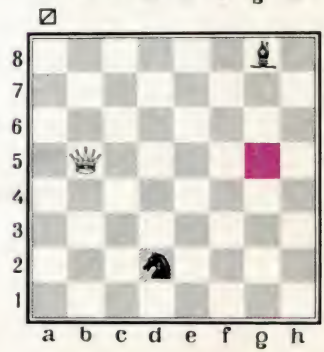
Sasha quickly moved the Queen, but Peter's father reminded him that hands should not be used and put the Queen back in her former place. Sasha turned red and said in a guilty voice that the Queen should be moved to d8.

"And how can a piece be captured in this position?"

"Move the Queen to d5!" Boris shouted immediately, afraid that Sasha would again







grab the Queen. Uncle Max said nothing and looked at Sasha.

"If we move the Queen to g5?" Sasha suggested.

"Now that's another matter. You were in too much of a hurry, Boris. From d5 the Queen does indeed attack both Black pieces, but on that square she herself comes under attack from the Bishop. And since it is Black to move, the White Queen will be taken. Do you remember when I showed you how Rooks and Pawns or Pawns by themselves can capture a cornered Knight? The Queen can easily cope alone with this task. To which square should the Queen move if she is to capture the Knight in the a8 corner?"

⊠ "To b7," Boris said.

"Or to c6," Sasha added after he had thought for a moment.

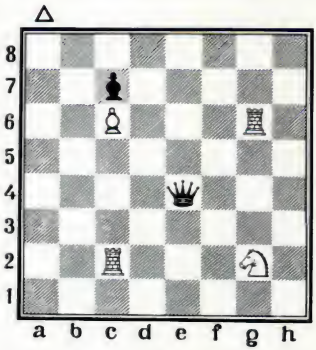
"Or a7 and b8!" Boris put in quickly.

"Correct. But the Queen can capture
△ the Knight on any square in the eighth rank and not just in the corner. Here for instance", he put the Knight on e8. "Now what move should the Queen make?"

Again Boris answered quickly that the Queen should move to d7. But Uncle Max showed them that the Knight could then escape to f6. Then Sasha thought that the Queen should move to e7. The ease with which the Queen was able to capture the leaping Knight took Sasha's breath away. Peter's father moved the Knight to h3 and Boris suggested putting the Queen on g3. When the Knight skipped to a4, the boys gave up trying to outdo each other—they both saw that the Queen must be placed next to the Knight. Not obliquely to him, but right up beside him. Then Boris asked whether the Queen could attack two Rooks at the same time and capture one of them. The boys learned that on an empty board two Rooks have nothing to fear from a Queen because they can immediately take up their position in one line and defend each other.

But if your own or enemy pieces prevent the Rooks from joining forces and coming to each other's assistance, one of them will fall when attacked by the Queen.

The boys also understood that it is not a good thing to bring out the Queen at the beginning of a game as she will be threatened by danger from all sides—

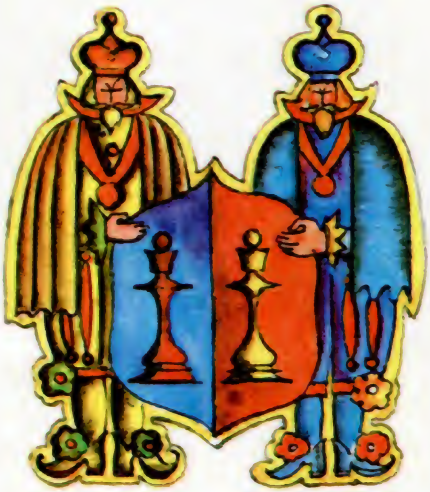


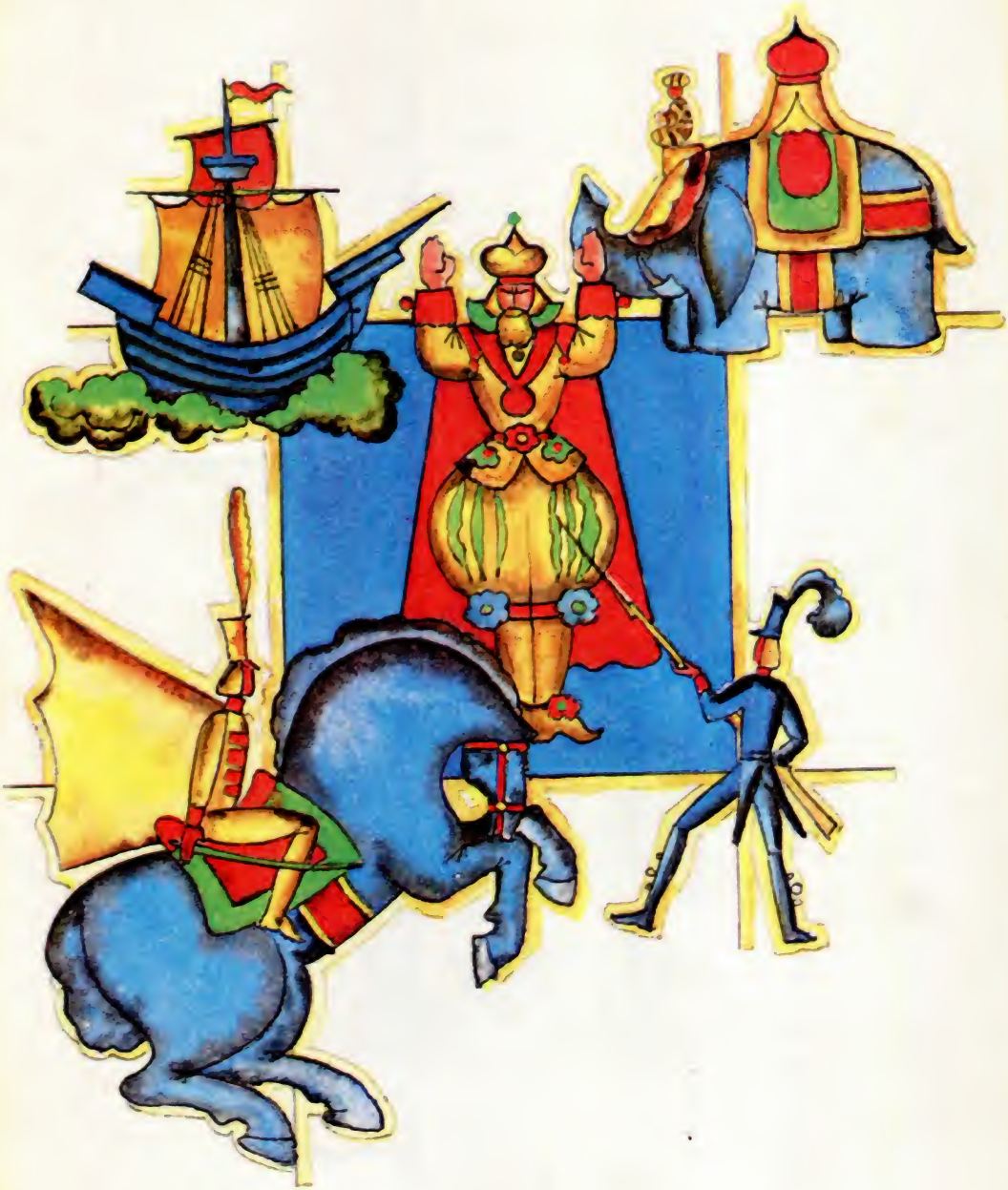
for everyone wants to destroy his opponent's most powerful piece. On the other hand, the Queen can inspire terror in the heat of the battle!

Now Sasha saw why a Pawn is promoted into a Queen when it reaches the last rank—with such an important piece you won't come unstuck!

And if Sasha were to have another chess dream, he wouldn't rack his brains wondering which piece to turn into, of course he would become a powerful Queen—the champion among chessmen. There was only one thing Sasha couldn't understand—why had Uncle Max said that the most important piece on the board was the King when he was weaker than the Queen?

Watch Out, Your Majesty!





That day Peter didn't go out to play and Sasha and Boris went round to see him at home. No sooner had they rung the bell than the door was flung open and the startled children saw before them a King! A serrated crown adorned his head and in his hand he held a sceptre—the insignia of royal power. Admittedly, the sceptre looked more like a folded umbrella and the royal crown had been cut out of paper, but for all that here was a real chess King! The boys guessed immediately that he was a chess King because in place of armour, a piece of checked cardboard protected his breast.

"Welcome to my chess kingdom!" announced the King in Peter's voice.

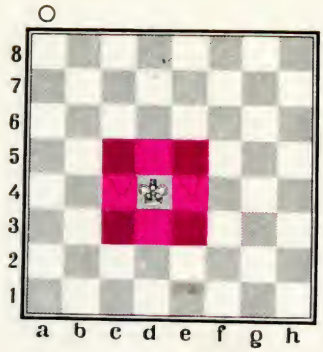
"And I am the Queen!" Boris exclaimed seizing a ski stick in the hall and assuming a fierce expression.

At that moment Uncle Max came out of the room and said that one King was enough for today, otherwise the boys might hurt themselves brandishing their "weapons". Turning to the King, he added:

"And you, Your Majesty, sit still and stop waving your umbrella around because the chess King is not supposed to poke his nose into trouble. The chess King is a timid creature, he likes peace and quiet and only at the very end of the battle will he occasionally show that he is no-one's fool."

The King sat at the end of the sofa looking bored while Sasha and Boris settled down beside Peter's father. The chessboard, of course, was already set up on the table.

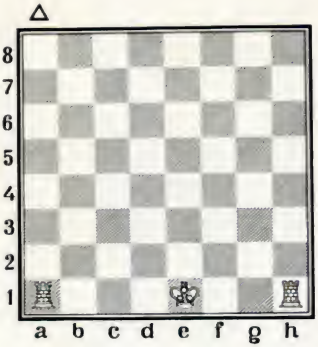
"Do you remember, boys, how the Queen moves? In straight lines and diagonals in any direction. The King also moves in straight lines and diagonals in any direction, but only one square at a time—he has a short stride. His mobility is superior only to that of the Pawn, but there is no way he can keep up with the other pieces. It would be truer to say that he finds it rather difficult to run away from the other pieces, because the King nearly always saves himself by flight and does not pursue the enemy. He is nevertheless the most important piece in the game of chess for the rules say you cannot play without a King. A chess war is waged for the sole purpose of placing the enemy King in a position from which there is no escape. When that happens—the war has been won! You may be left with any number of pieces and Pawns at that moment, but if your King cannot escape his downfall—you have lost.



"That is why the King is the most important piece in the game."

Sasha and Boris fell silent amazed by the special status of this rather cowardly and difficult to manoeuvre piece. The chess King who was growing restless on the sofa, jumped up and announced triumphantly:

△



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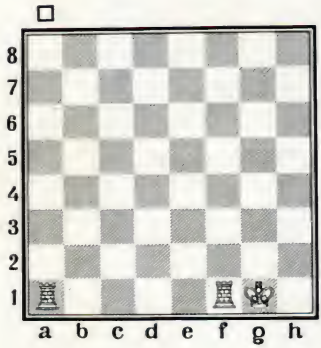


"As you see, the King is the most important of all!"

The King, apparently, was feeling hot for he started stripping off his royal armour.

"So, it's not easy being a King then?" Peter's father asked him. "Yes, the chess King is not to be envied. He has to expect trouble all the time in the form of attack by enemy pieces. To make it easier for the slow-moving King to seek shelter in a place of safety, a move called "Castling" was introduced into the game. The rules allow a player to Castle only once in the course of a game. That's another difficult chess word for you—Castl-ing. This is how it's done..."

Uncle Max took all the pieces from the board, leaving only the White King and the two White Rooks on their squares. △

He moved one of the Rooks up next to the King and then made the King skip over him landing on the other side of the Rook on the adjoining square. □

Both the Rook's change of position and the King's skip over him count as one move. Castling is only allowed if neither the King nor the Rook has moved before, and if, after Castling, the squares on which the King and the Rook stand are not under attack from enemy pieces.

"On which side of the board can you do this..." Sasha stumbled over the difficult word. "This Castling?"

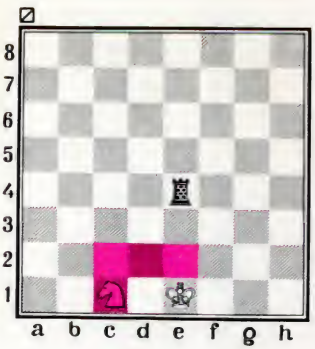
"Ah yes, boys, I forgot to tell you that you can Castle on the left and on the right. If you Castle on the Queen's side there is further to go than if you Castle on the King's side. Do you see?" ▽

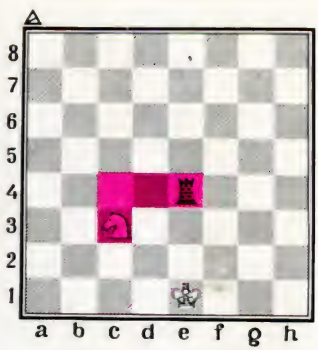
"Yes, I see," Boris replied. "But which is better—on the King's side or on the Queen's side?"

"What on the King's side or the Queen's side?" Peter's father asked, pretending not to understand, although there was a twinkle in his eye. Boris too was obliged to pronounce this awkward word.

"Which is better—Castling on the King's side or the Queen's side?"

"Well, it depends... It's better to Castle on the side where there is a solid barrier of Pawns behind which the King can hide in safety."





"How can the King be captured?" Sasha asked.

"The King does not have the right to move to a square on which he could be captured. That is why, in the past, when the King came under attack the player had to call out loud the word 'Check!' which means 'King, beware!' Nowadays you don't have to say 'Check', but a direct attack by an enemy piece on the King is still called 'Check'. Then the King must either move or protect himself against the attacking piece. Like this, for instance: the Black Rook has put the White King in Check, but the King can be protected if the White Knight is moved from c1 to e2. Another way of saving the King is to capture the attacking piece. Now, if in this position the White Knight were standing on c3, he could capture the Black Rook and save his King. If the King is in a position when he comes under attack and can neither move to another square, nor protect himself, nor capture the attacking piece, it is called 'Checkmate'. The death of the King is the end of the game. An attack on the King which results in his downfall is Check and Mate. There are a great many po-

sitions in which the King can be Checkmated. Let's look at a few of them to begin with."

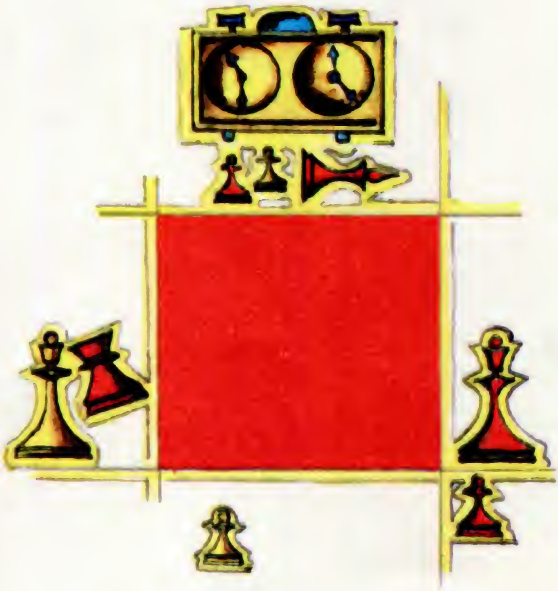
One after the other Uncle Max showed the boys different positions from which the King had no way of escape.

Sasha was delighted. Everything he had so far learned about this fascinating game now acquired a new meaning for him. The King is Checkmated! The King is Checkmated! Watch out, Your Majesty!

At home Sasha spent a long time thinking about the different Checkmate positions Peter's father had shown them and he desperately wanted to create such situations himself in which he could strike crippling blows at the enemy King.

As he was falling asleep Sasha murmured "Check and Mate, Check and Mate... Watch out, Your Majesty!.."

Touch—Move



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At nursery school Sasha and Boris arranged to play their first real game of chess that evening. Now that they knew all the rules it was time to start a war of wood. It would be interesting to see who Checkmated whom!

Sasha had hardly finished supper when there was a long impatient ring on the doorbell and Boris stood there all out of breath. He was in a tremendous hurry and quickly wiped his feet on the mat as though he were performing some energetic dance.

Looking at his friend, Sasha too started to hurry. The chessmen were set up in a flash and the battle commenced! The Pawns moved forward, the Knights leapt across the board and the Bishops swept along their diagonals. Boris even Castled. Sasha, however, didn't manage to: he was so carried away capturing enemy Pawns that he failed to notice Boris had taken first his Rook and then his Queen. Soon Sasha's King was surrounded by Boris's pieces.

"Check!" Boris shouted in excitement. "Check again! Watch out, King! No, you can't move there—you'll come under attack from my Rook! And you can't go there either, you'll be in Check from my Knight!"

Sasha held the Black King in his hand, not knowing where to put him—all the surrounding squares were bombarded by White pieces. Boris was exultant.

"Checkmate! Your King is Checkmated! You've lost! Let's play again."

Sasha tried to play the next game more carefully. Before moving a piece he first looked to see whether it would come under attack, and before making an exchange he stopped to think which piece was more valuable and whether it would be advantageous to swop. After his first victory Boris, however, played too quickly and too confidently. He couldn't wait to Checkmate Sasha's King again. Sasha, of course, refrained from saying to his friend "He who laughs last, laughs best", but one after the other, Boris's pieces came under attack and disappeared from the board.

Now it was Sasha's turn to pursue the enemy King. He attacked him from this side and that, Checking him time and again, but Boris's King proved to be very agile and Sasha simply couldn't trap him. Even his own pieces seemed to be preventing him from making short work of the enemy King. Only when Sasha started to drive Boris's King back to the edge of the board, cutting off his escape route to the centre squares did it become clear that Boris could not save himself. And indeed, after several more moves his King was Checkmated.

Now every evening the boys took it in turn to play chess at each other's home. They were well matched and nearly always won a game apiece, which meant that no-one was upset. True, they would sometimes argue when one of them made a move and then changed his mind, putting the piece back on the square and moving another. If the new move wasn't right either, it would be a case of "Let's go back to how it was...". Both Sasha and Boris took back moves and the game became so confused that they had to stop and start all over again. However, they

didn't argue with each other for long, for then there would be no-one to play with and that was unthinkable!

Sasha and Boris got used to playing with each other and it seemed to both of them that they were good players. But one day Peter called in and sat down at the chessboard with them. First he beat Sasha and then Boris and the same thing happened a second time! And not once could either of the boys put Peter's King in Check. Peter noticed that they were upset and consoled them:

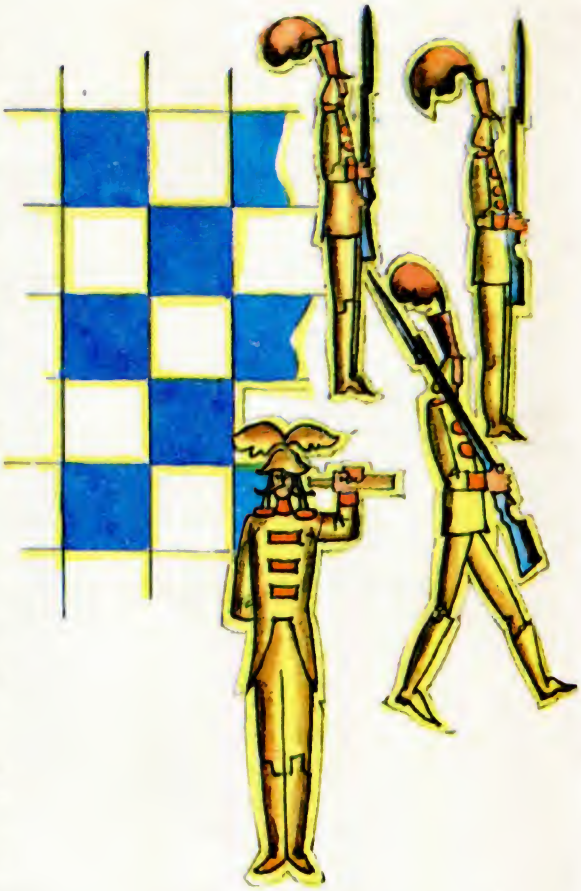
"Never mind, don't worry. It's just that you play with each other, and I with Dad. Dad says it's good to play against someone better than yourself. Anyway, why have you stopped coming to see us?"

The next day the boys went round to see Peter.

"Ah, the champions! Come in, come in!" Uncle Max greeted them. "So, now you know how the pieces move, you think there's nothing more to learn? No, boys, it is only now that the art of playing chess begins! Let's have a game! Set up the armies!"

Boris played first. After making a few hurried moves, he suddenly noticed that he had put his Rook under attack. Quickly Boris grabbed his Rook and put him back in his former position. Peter's father frowned:

"No, no! You can't take a move back. In chess there is a rule which says that if a player touches one of his men he must move it. You make the move and you take the consequences. Even if you see that you've made a mistake, you can't take back the move."



Sasha remembered how often he and Boris had taken back moves and got into such a muddle that they could no longer remember where the pieces were supposed to be.

While Sasha was thinking that never again would he take back a move or allow Boris to either, Boris's King was Checkmated. Boris wanted to start another game there and then, but Sasha protested—it was his turn to play after all.

For the first time Sasha sat at the chessboard with a real grown-up player and not another boy like himself. At first Sasha felt timid but then he became so immersed in the game that he almost forgot against whom he was playing. Perhaps he would even have felt himself to be Uncle Max's equal, had not the position of his men deteriorated with every move. It seemed to Sasha that there were so many more of his opponent's forces and that each of his pieces was much stronger than the same pieces which belonged to him. Soon Sasha's King was left without any protection and Checkmated in the middle of the board.

"Well, boys, you both play the same," Uncle Max hesitated for a moment, "and you both play equally badly. You know how the pieces move, but you have no idea where to move them to. An army that remains in barracks is not very dangerous. The pieces must not be left standing on their squares—they must be brought out into good strategic positions and only then can the attack begin. That's why you must first develop the game and move out as many pieces as possible rather

than shift the same pieces backwards and forwards several times. It's easier to bring out the minor pieces first—the Knights and the Bishops. What must you do before you can bring out the Bishops?"

"Open up a path for them," Sasha answered.

"That's right. And it's best to move the Pawns which stand in the centre files—Pawns 'd' and 'e'. Why? Because by advancing the centre Pawns you open up a path for the Bishop and the Queen at the same time and because you can very easily manoeuvre the pieces when they are protected by the centre Pawns. Do you understand how you should play at the beginning of a game? Sasha, you tell us."

"One must bring out the Knights and the Bishops and move forward the centre Pawns."

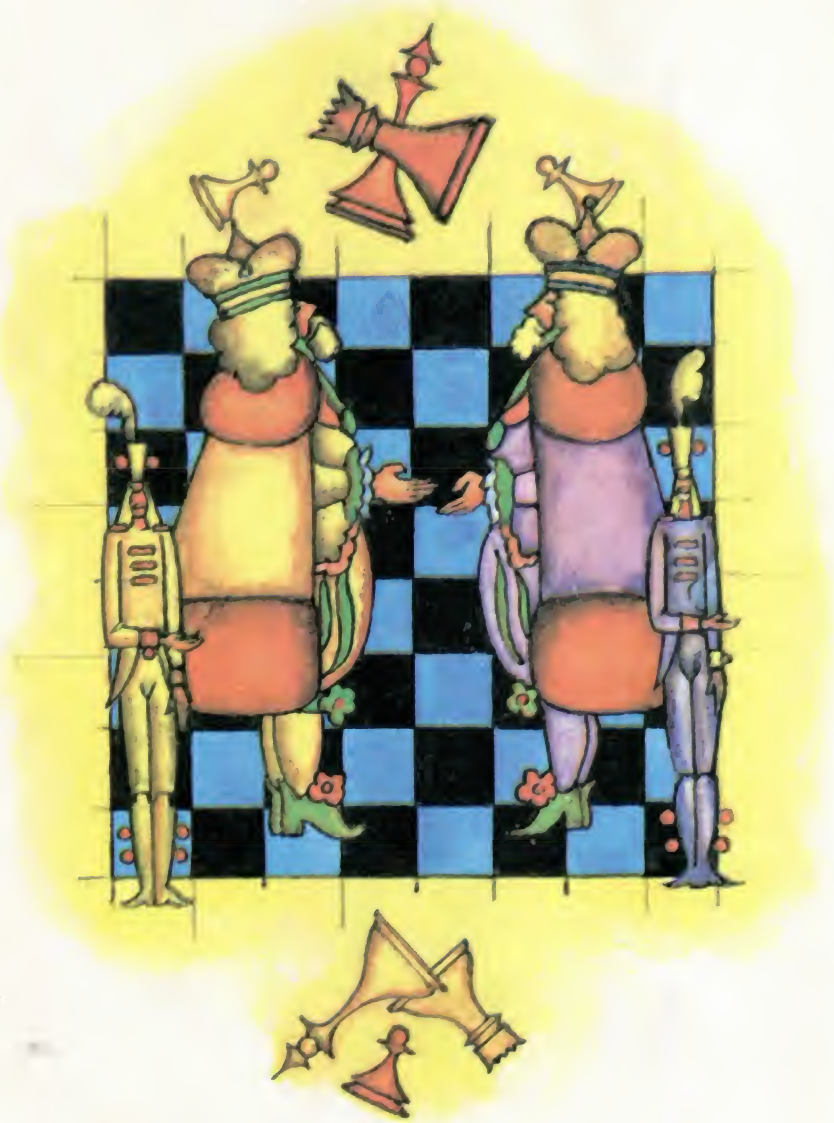
"That's right. Before attacking the enemy you should have as many as possible of your own pieces in good strategic positions and not move the same piece several times. See how much I have told you this evening and yet this is only the beginning, only the rudiments of the science of chess. We'll have another session in about two weeks. In the meantime keep playing..."

Sasha and Boris went away feeling serious and subdued. It was not proving at all easy to play chess and they still had so much to learn. But then, they were still only very small...

"It's a lot easier knocking down chessmen with a cube, isn't it?" Sasha smiled at his friend.

"Oh don't..." Boris muttered guiltily.

Who's Won?
It's a Stalemate!



When they were at nursery school or out of doors in the fresh air Sasha and Boris played with the other children. They played hockey and threw snowballs, played hide-and-seek and being at war. But Sasha and Boris had another game that the rest of the children didn't know about. This "other" game was chess. Had there been even one chess set in the school Sasha and Boris would not have kept their newly-found interest a secret, but happily have told the other children about this fascinating game. But there was no chess set and most of the children probably had no idea what one looked like. Sasha wanted to take his board and chessmen to school, but his mother wouldn't let him. So, Sasha and Boris only played chess with each other or with Peter, and very occasionally with Peter's father.

Sasha noticed that when he or Boris captured a piece, their advantage increased—they were in a stronger position—and the stronger they were, the easier it became to pursue the depleted enemy. Once Sasha managed to capture Boris's Queen. After the Queen had gone, Boris still had a Bishop and a Knight, but Sasha captured these minor pieces one after the other and was left with his extra Queen.

Sasha captured the Black Pawn on f7 with his Queen so as to Checkmate Boris's King in the next move. Boris seized his King, intending to move him out of danger. He was always very quick to reach for his pieces but then found it was not advantageous to move them. Sometimes Boris even sat on his hands, so that they "could not act before his brain", as he put it.

But this time Boris did not sit on his hands for there was no escaping defeat. Boris held the Black King in his hand, but there was nowhere for him to go—all the squares were under attack from Sasha's Queen. And the Black Pawns were blocked—they could not move.

"There's nowhere to move..." Boris said quietly, looking in dismay at the board and then at Sasha.

"That means you've lost!" Sasha announced firmly. "I'll Checkmate you in the next move."

"But it's my move," Boris objected hesitantly. "I have to make a move..."

"You're Checkmated and that's that!" Sasha waved his arm. But his friend did not agree.

"It's still not Checkmate. You don't have the right to make two consecutive moves."

Neither boy would give in. But why spend a whole evening arguing? The boys decided to ask Peter's father to settle their dispute.

Still convinced he was right, Sasha carefully carried the board with the pieces arranged on it while Boris went ahead and rang the bell. Uncle Max looked surprised when he saw Sasha standing with the board in his hands.

"Why have you brought the chess set? We have one here."

"This is our game so far. Do you see the position? I still have my Queen..."

"And I have nowhere to move."

Sasha looked hopefully at Peter's father.

"Whose game is it?"

"It's a Stalemate!" came the unexpected reply. "I haven't told you about this yet, I was afraid it would confuse you, but in chess warfare there are draws as well as victories and defeats. A game can end in a draw at any time, if both sides agree."

"I don't agree!" Sasha announced.

"Wait a second, don't interrupt. There can be draws when no agreement is necessary. If any move my King makes places him in Check and I have no other pieces or they are all blocked and my opponent has not called Check, then my King is considered to be Stalemated and the game ends in a draw. This is your position now. Of course, it's very annoying to have to agree to a draw when you're left with your Queen, but there's nothing you can do about it—that's a rule of chess. A player often gets out of a difficult situation by forcing his opponent to Stalemate him. Look."

Uncle Max set up the pieces.

"White has two extra Pawns and with them you would think he ought to win. But it is Black's turn and he moves his Queen to h4. You see, he places her under attack and sacrifices her, but in so doing he has created a Stalemate position and Black obtains a draw. White has to take the Black Queen because his King has nowhere to retreat."

At that moment Peter came in from the next room.

"You didn't know about the Stalemate? Oh, it's a very cunning trick! When you pursue the enemy King to the edge of the board, you have to watch out that you don't finish up with a Stalemate instead of a Checkmate!"

"It is also a draw when perpetual Check occurs," Peter's father continued. "The player for whom things are going badly will also aim for perpetual Check. Now look. The White Pawns are about to be promoted into Queens. But Black has an unexpected opportunity to save himself."

Uncle Max placed the Black Queen on f1 and showed them that after

White averts Check by moving his Queen, Black again calls Check on h3.

"White once more protects himself by moving his Queen to h2 and Black again puts him in Check from f1 and so on *ad infinitum*. That's perpetual Check for you! You may have extra Pawns and even extra pieces, but you won't win. If, for example, you are left with a King and a Bishop and your opponent has only a King—it's also a draw. A King and a Bishop or a King and a Knight—even two Knights—cannot Checkmate the other King. In such cases you should immediately agree to a draw rather than torment yourself and your opponent. Do you see?

"And now, boys, you'd better go out and play otherwise you'll not get enough fresh air and that won't do at all! If you don't have plenty of exercise and run around after balls and pucks, your brain won't work for you. Then you won't be able to get the better of all these wily chessmen. Boys who can ski and skate well don't lose their way on the chessboard. All the famous chess-players—the Grandmasters as they're

called—do a lot of physical training. You will often see Botvinnik and Petrosyan on the ski slopes. Spassky is a good swimmer and plays tennis. And they have all achieved remarkable victories on the chessboard, they were all World Champions. So, there you are, boys. See that next time you come with rosy cheeks—like this," he spread his fingers and held them against his cheek to show Sasha and Boris just how much colour they should have.

Not Numbers but Know-How

Sasha didn't forget the position Peter's father had shown them—the position in which the most powerful piece, the Black Queen, chose to meet her end. White had captured the Black Queen and gained an enormous advantage ... but had still not been able to win. The number of pieces you have is not always so important. In chess remarkable things can happen—real miracles.

Sasha very much wanted to achieve some chess miracle himself, to think up something really unusual. Now, when he played with Boris he no longer made such timid moves as in the past. Whatever the cost, he was determined to get at the enemy King and left his Pawns and pieces under attack.... Consequently, he lost. After every defeat Sasha told himself that he must not forget the value of each piece. But he still went on looking for his chess fairy tale—for it is in fairy tales that the most unusual adventures take place.

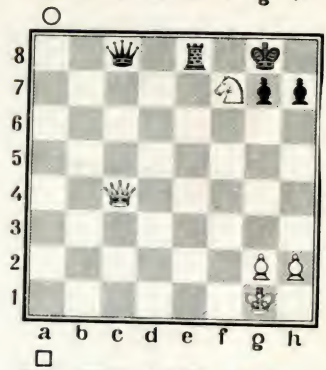
△ One day Peter came running up to Sasha and hardly able to stop himself from shouting in excitement, he announced:

○ "I know such an interesting Checkmate! Oh, it's a beauty!" and he started to arrange the pieces. "Who do you think will win here if it's White to move? Black do you think? He has the more powerful pieces after all... But no, White wins!"

Peter moved the Knight to f7 and put the Black King in Check. Then playing for Black, he placed the King on g8, explaining that this was the only possible move.

△

○



□

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In the next move Peter put the Knight on h6 and again called Check.

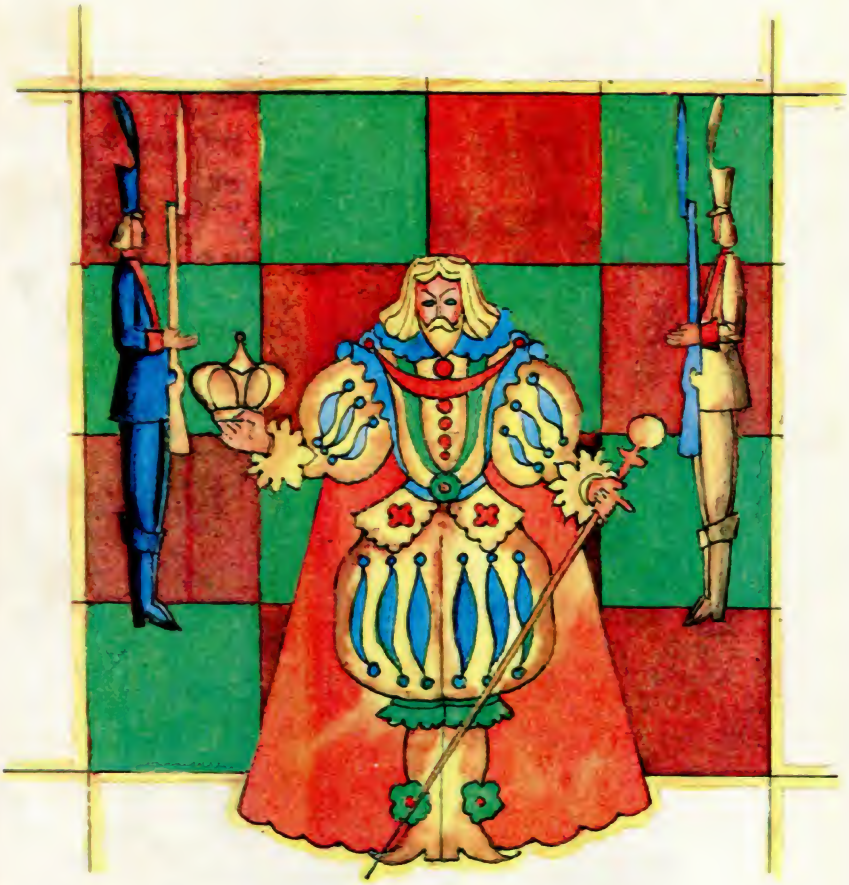
Sasha wanted to capture the importunate White Knight with the Pawn, but Peter pointed out that if he did that, the Black King would be in Check from the Queen. When Sasha made to capture the Queen with the Black Queen, Peter reminded him that he was in Check from the Knight. Sasha was nonplussed as Peter explained rather pompously that this was double Check, and as it was impossible to capture two pieces at the same time, the King had to move. But where? If the King moved to f8 the White Queen would move to f7, and, protected by the Knight, Checkmate him.

That means the King can only move into the corner. Peter banged the White Queen down on g8. Check!

Sasha looked surprised and captured the Queen with the Rook. Then Peter moved the Knight to f7 and shouted at the top of his voice: "Checkmate! You're Checkmated!"

Sasha refrained from saying that he hadn't played this game and it was not he who was Checkmated—it was such a splendid position where one Knight can beat a whole army. Sasha thought that, after all, he had not waited in vain for a chess miracle.

The King Goes on the March



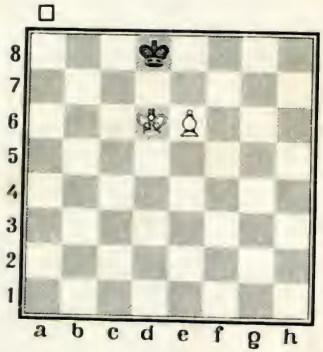
Sasha really enjoyed attacking enemy Kings, putting them in Check, threatening them with Checkmate and driving the most important of the enemy pieces into a hopeless position. But when his own King was in danger, Sasha's morale suffered. He lost confidence and derived less pleasure from the game. So, Sasha always endeavoured to hide his King away in a safe corner and keep his peace of mind. But he began to notice that at the end of a game when only a few pieces were left on the board, the King could not remain on the side—it was just not possible to do without him.

And generally speaking, there was more than enough for the King to do at the end of a game. He had to protect his Pawns and attack hostile men. Sasha discovered that the nearer the King to the decisive encounter, the better. Towards the end of the game the moment comes when you have to say to the timid King: "Enough of hiding, Your Majesty, it is time to come out into the open." Besides it is now easier for the King to embark on his long journey because there are so few enemy pieces left on the board to attack him.

Sasha now knew that at the end of a game the situation often arises when neither side has sufficient power to make a successful attack on the enemy King and Checkmate him. When that happens, you must try to advance your Pawn to the last rank and turn it into a Queen. With an extra Queen it is not difficult to seize the hostile King and win the game. Only it's no simple matter to push the Pawn through. Once Sasha and Boris found themselves in this position.

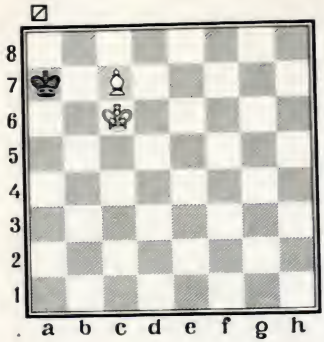
Sasha boldly moved his Pawn forward and put Boris's King in Check. Boris's King moved to e8 immediately in front of the Pawn. Sasha moved his King to e6 so as not to leave unprotected his advancing Pawn which was about to become a Queen! Then Boris clapped his hands in delight and yelled: "Stalemate!" And indeed, there was nowhere for the Black King to go.

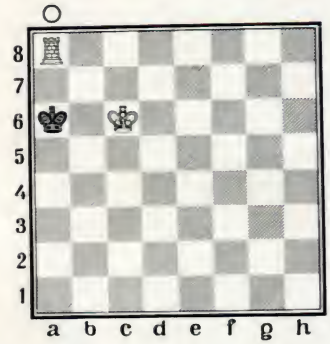
Whenever Sasha or his opponent reached the last rank, they always promoted their Pawns into Queens. But why should the rules say that the Pawn can be promoted into any piece? It

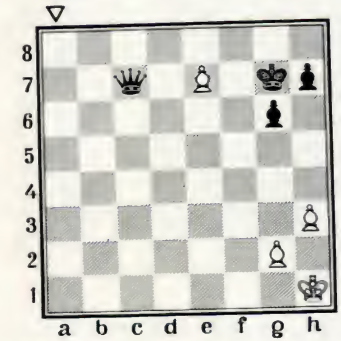


must mean that there are situations when it is advantageous to choose a Knight or a Rook instead of the powerful Queen? This question troubled Sasha for a long time and once again he had to turn to Peter's father for the explanation.

"Well, it's quite clear, if there is a rule, it's there to be made use of," Uncle







Max said. "Only, positions in which it is better to choose one of the weaker pieces are rare. Look at this first position. It's White to move. How can you Checkmate the Black King?"

Boris grabbed the White Queen from the pieces lying on the table and was about to place her on the board when he met the warning look from Peter's father. He put the Queen back.

"That's right, Boris! He who laughs last, laughs best. If you choose the Queen, Black will be in Stalemate. What piece should the Pawn be promoted into?"

"Into a Rook!" Sasha answered quickly, delighted that he had found the solution. "Then the King will have one move before he is Checkmated by the Rook."

"So, you see, it is not always advantageous to promote the Pawn into a Queen," Uncle Max said. "And here's another example. It's White to move. He can advance the Pawn to the last rank and convert it into any one of the pieces. But which one?"

"Into a Knight!" This time Boris forestalled Sasha.

His answer was the correct one. Sasha too saw that if a Queen were chosen there would be an equal number of pieces, but if you took a Knight he would make a "Pin"—Checking the King and attacking the Queen—and White would be left with an extra piece.

...At home Sasha thought about how the Pawn had become a Knight and how this unexpected promotion had immediately changed the course of the battle. He longed to show someone this unusual position and the many other miracles which occur on the checkered board.

All Children Should Learn

As though alive the participants of the war of wood, the heroes of fascinating chess adventures rose up in front of Sasha.

Here come the fine round-headed Pawns, stepping out with soldier-like precision. They are the smallest on the square battlefield. But the courageous Pawns have no fear and make way for no-one. It is as if these intrepid warriors were saying: not a single step back, only forward! What does it matter that the Pawns are smaller and weaker than the other pieces? When they are together, marching shoulder to shoulder into the attack, many of the stronger chess pieces take refuge in flight. And the Pawns maintain a stalwart defence, protecting each other. Kings feel safe behind their serried ranks. Long-distanse fighting Bishops take aim and spirited agile Knights leap out from behind the barriers of Pawns. Even the powerful Queen is prepared to take cover behind the small courageous Pawns in moments of danger.

And here come the quick-moving but rather clumsy Rooks sweeping across the board at full speed. They need space and open lines. They cannot wield their power in a confined area and it seems that all the time they are demanding—make way! Rooks are powerful pieces and they are especially powerful when they reinforce each other. If two Rooks join forces and command an open line or if they penetrate the enemy's rear line then—watch out! They will annihilate everything in their path!

Then Sasha remembered that chess Bishops cannot protect each other because from the start to the end of the battle one of them moves on white diagonal squares and the other on black diagonal squares. Sasha even began to feel sorry for these elegant warriors who are forbidden by the rules of chess to come to each other's defence. On the other hand though, Bishops can join forces and bombard the enemy on black and white diagonals at the same time. It turns out that Bishops are good friends!

Sasha thought of the Knights with particular pleasure. Without these remarkable horses chess would be altogether too rectilinear, too regular. The indomitable and reckless Knights can turn everything upside down! And then there are these unexpected attacks—"Pins" from which there is no escape and no cover. Yes, the Knight is an agile piece and with him one has to be on one's guard...

And the Queen? Sasha thought about this commander of the chessboard with respect and a certain caution: the Queen is exceedingly powerful and menacing and it is terrible to lose her because of some stupid blunder. When the Queen dominates the board how weak and vulnerable the other pieces seem!

The awkward slow-moving King rose up in Sasha's imagination as though he were really alive. In appearance he is tall and thin, yet he moves with as much difficulty as a clumsy fat man. And he will happily settle down in a quiet place behind the Pawns, observing how the others fight for him. Is that really honourable? There's nothing you can do about it though—without the King you can't play chess and all

the pieces have to protect His Majesty. Such are the rules. Then Sasha recalled that after all the King is quite likeable, particularly at the end of the game when he comes out of hiding and boldly hurries to the defence of his soldier-Pawns. It is very agreeable to observe the King when he has plucked up his courage!

All these pieces, so different in character, march, leap and storm across the chessboard! Each has his own habits, his own style and very nearly his own face, although it is really only the Knight who has a face; you can't see any features in the other pieces. Yes, these pieces are very different, but altogether they make a fascinating game!

Then Sasha thought that he and Boris were behaving badly in hiding their new pastime from the other children at nursery school. The other children too would certainly be interested.

When they were at school the next morning Sasha and Boris had a long conversation in whispers. Then together they went up to the teacher. Boris was bolder and began first:

"Miss, why don't we have a chess set in the school?"

"What do we need one for?" the teacher asked in surprise.

"It's such an interesting game!" Sasha blurted out. He felt offended that their teacher could be indifferent to this best of games.

"But who will teach us to play?" she objected. "None of the teachers plays chess."

"We'll teach the others!" Boris announced boldly.

"Yes, Boris and I will teach them," Sasha supported his friend.

The teacher was even more surprised. She looked at Boris and then at Sasha. Gradually her features relaxed into a smile.

"So, you can play chess and you want all the other children to learn?"

"Yes, it will be interesting for everybody," Boris said confidently and Sasha nodded in silent agreement.

"Well," said their teacher after thinking for a moment, "perhaps we can try... Not long ago I saw a set with large chessmen—if we get that, all the children could learn at the same time. You, Boris, and you, Sasha, can be the teachers and we'll find one of the grown-ups to be your assistant," she added jokingly.

Sasha and Boris were very happy. They had a clear picture of the children gathering in the large playroom when they had finished playing outside. And they, Sasha and Boris, would tell them about the wonderful land of chess where wooden figures wage a toy war among themselves.

All children should know what an interesting game chess is!

Appendix

The authors have deliberately omitted from the text two rules of the game which, in their view, could cause difficulties. Although these rules are not essential for beginners, there comes a time when they will have to be learned. The authors decided therefore to explain these rules in the appendix—"just in case". The first rule affects Pawns.

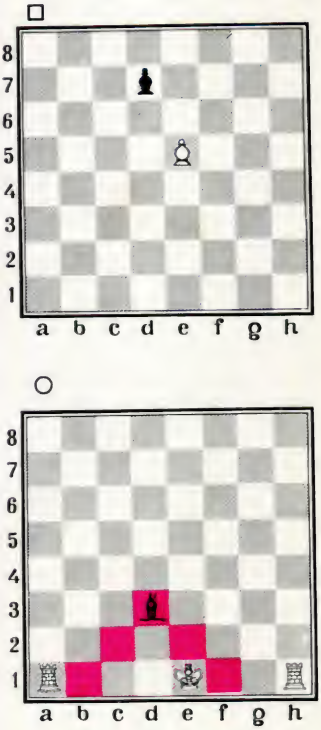
En Passant. If your opponent's Pawn takes advantage of its right to make two steps on its first move, passing by a square attacked by your Pawn, your Pawn can capture it.

The capture takes place as if your opponent's Pawn took one step forward on its first move and came under attack from your Pawn. You could then capture your opponent's Pawn in the usual way, although it is not obligatory to do so. Both sides should bear this possibility in mind.

Finally, a Pawn must be captured *en passant* straightaway, on the answering move, otherwise the right is forfeited.

Castling in the Path of a Hostile Man. The King is not permitted to Castle if the square he skips lies in the path of a hostile man.

Be quite clear: when Castling the Rook can cross the path of a hostile man. It is only the King who is forbidden to do so. In the position shown in the last diagram White can Castle on the Queen's side, but not on the King's side.



Answer These Questions Without Your Parents' Help

1

Between which pieces do the Knights stand in their initial position?

2

Between which pieces do the Bishops stand at the beginning of the game?

3

What colour is the square in the corner on the right-hand side of the player?

4

Why did the King in the fairy story not learn to play chess well?

5

In how many moves can the Rook attack any square on an open board?

6

How many squares are there on the board from which the Knight has only two moves?

7

Which Bishops never collide with each other?

8

How can a Pawn protect itself from a Bishop on an open board?

9

Which piece can make a sudden attack on a Queen and not be threatened by her at the same time?

10

Why cannot a King move onto a square immediately adjacent to another King?

11

Where can a King capture a Knight?

12

What is it called when the King and his Rook move at the same time?

13

From which piece is it impossible to take cover when it attacks?

14

When does the King become courageous?

15

Which pieces can be brought out when the Pawns are still in place?

16

Which piece can skip over another piece only once in the entire game?

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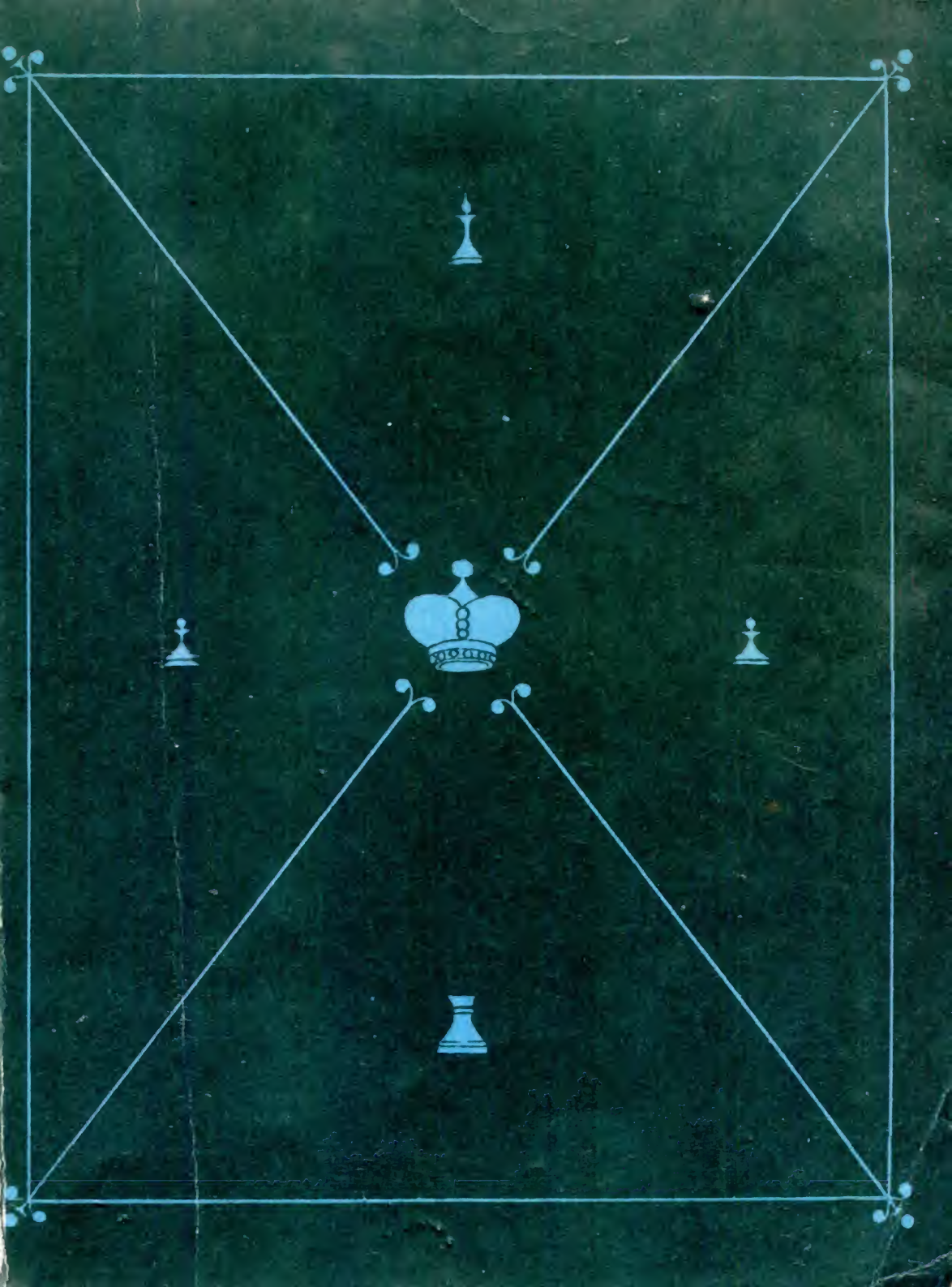

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